

THE BUYER'S GUIDE FOR COMIC FANDOM®

NO. 183 * MAY 20, 1977



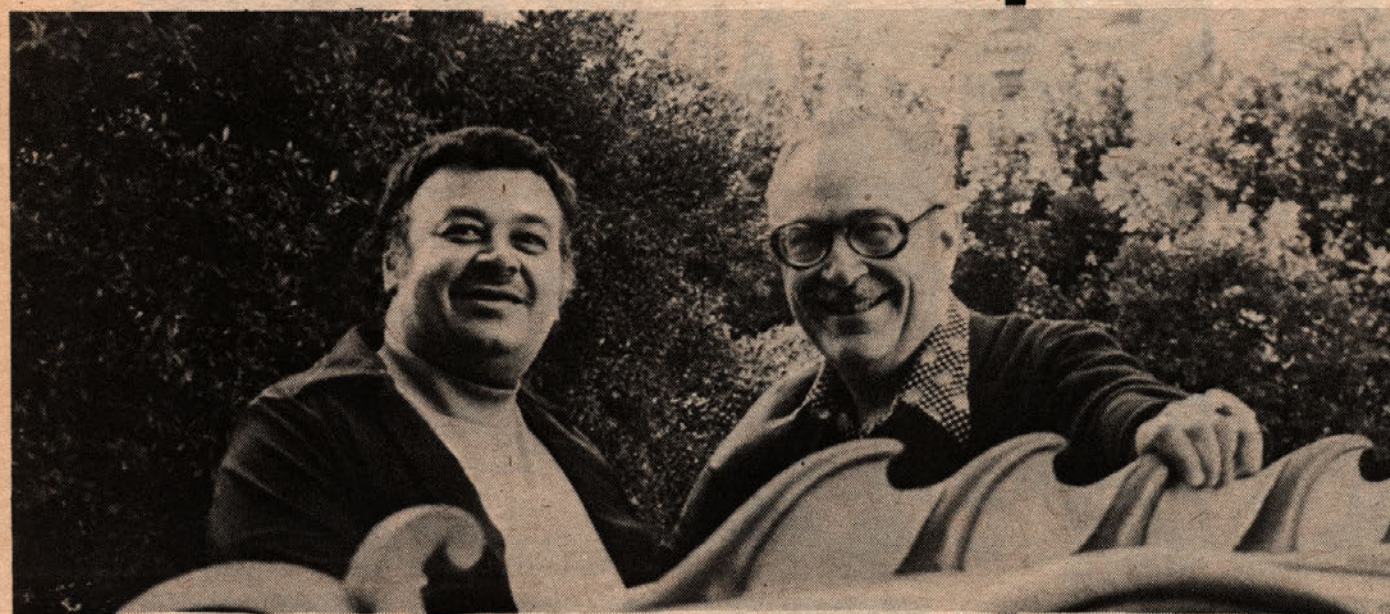


FORREST J ACKERMAN

RIGHT: FJA and monster

BELOW: Shel Dorf and FJA at the Ackermansion

(PHOTO BY DENNIS BILLOWS)



Dorf: This is Shel Dorf, coming to you from the Ackermansion in Hollywood, California, and we're talking with Forry Ackerman. Forry, it's good to be in your presence here this morning in a quiet, sun-filled room in your house away from the madding crowd. Whenever I see you it's usually at a convention. I know you're very occupied--in two ways: as a celebrity and as a fan. For the purposes of this interview I'd like to kind of go back and do sort of a biographical report on Forrest J. Ackerman--something that you yourself can't do in *Famous Monsters* because it would be too self-serving, but I know there's an interesting story behind all this. Let's start out with where you were born and the year you were born.

Ackerman: I was born right here in Los Angeles, California, on November 24, 1916--around 6:23 in the morning, I believe.

Dorf: What did your father do for an occupation?

Ackerman: My father was the chief statistician in an oil company that no longer exists. Basically, it was a J. Paul Getty corporation. It was called the Associated Oil Company while it lasted, and he was the assistant to the vice president of transportation. He was just very much of a businessman and hoped that I would follow in his footsteps. Indeed, I did try it for one year, but basically I hate figures and love words, and my job for that first year was to total up columns of figures all month long, and then in month number two I would subtract all those figures, and at the end of sixty days everything zeroed out and I would know I had done my work right. And that was so incredibly boring to me I just couldn't see a life involved with figures when I love words so much.

Dorf: You mentioned that first year. At about what age were you when your father expected you to go into this business?

Ackerman: Actually, for the first job I ever had I got a civil service senior typist rating in about 1937 and then I started right at the top as far as typing goes, and I've only gotten faster in the intervening years. Nowadays I use the Selectric floating ball. But after about a year working for the government, Dad got me the job in his company. That would have been about 1938, I believe, because while I was working for the Associated Oil Company, my favorite science fiction film of all time, *Metropolis*, was revived at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Well, I put together a theater party of members of the Los Angeles Science-Fantasy Society. I recall that Ray Bradbury went to see *Metropolis*, as did Henry Kuttner, who was alive at the time, and my dearly beloved grandmother went with me, and I called myself to the attention of the manager of the Academy because I was the one who went over and paid and picked up the tickets. He, in

talking with me, discovered that I had an enormous interest in motion pictures--the mundane movies--that I had seen as many as 356 feature-length films in a single year (sometimes as many as seven in a day), and it seemed to him that I might well work into the Academy of Motion Pictures. Well, that suited me eminently. My earliest dreams of making a living had been to be the secretary and traveling companion of some motion picture personality that I admired. If I had been able to wave a magic wand originally, why, I suppose I would have become Marlene Dietrich's secretary. Or it could have been Claude Rains or Boris Karloff or Lugosi or any of many particular stars that I admired at the time. My dad did try to open doors for me at movie studios, but they just weren't hiring even kids to run errands with letters at that time, so I wound up in the oil company. But the man at the Academy of Motion Pictures made me an offer I couldn't refuse. First of all, it was taking me away from numbers and putting me right in the atmosphere of filmdom. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday night at the Academy they had their own little private showings, and I was so knowledgeable about the films that generally I would get up and give a pep talk to the people. One of the greatest nights of all was when they showed *Metropolis* there and Fritz Lang showed his personal collection of stills from it. So I left the oil company after a year and went to work for the Academy.

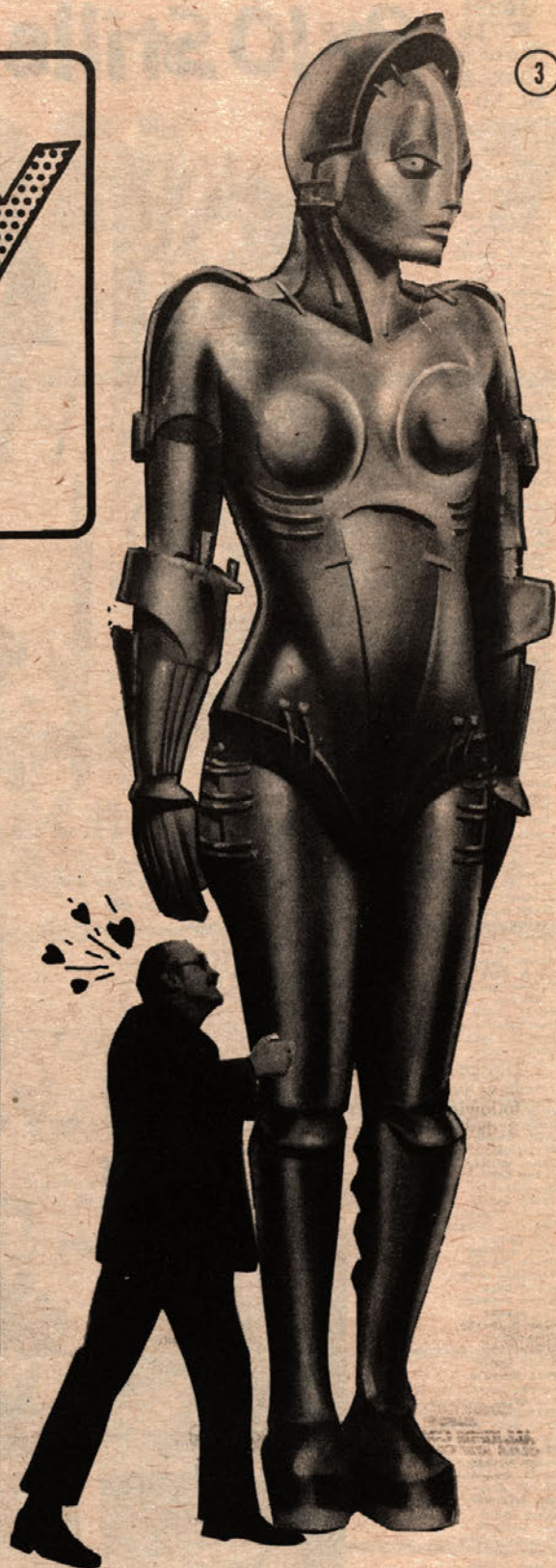
I'm recalling now that the year that *Gone With the Wind* ran away with all of the Oscars that I was at the Coconut Grove guarding the Oscars behind the scenes so nobody would swipe them.

Dorf: Let's get back to your earlier childhood now. We'll skip back from 1939, back a few years. Do you have any brothers and sisters?

Ackerman: Seven years after I was born, my brother Alden Lorraine Ackerman came along. There was never any sibling rivalry there, at all, that I recall . . .

Dorf: Was he interested in science fiction like you were?

Ackerman: Well, he only lived to be twenty-one--not even quite twenty-one. He got up on New Year's Day, 1945, and wasn't alive that night, courtesy of Hitler and his gang. He was killed in World War II in the Battle of the Bulge. But there was a seven year difference between us, and we were as different as the proverbial night and day. My brother was "the all-American boy"--he had a newspaper route, he was active in sports, he had girl-



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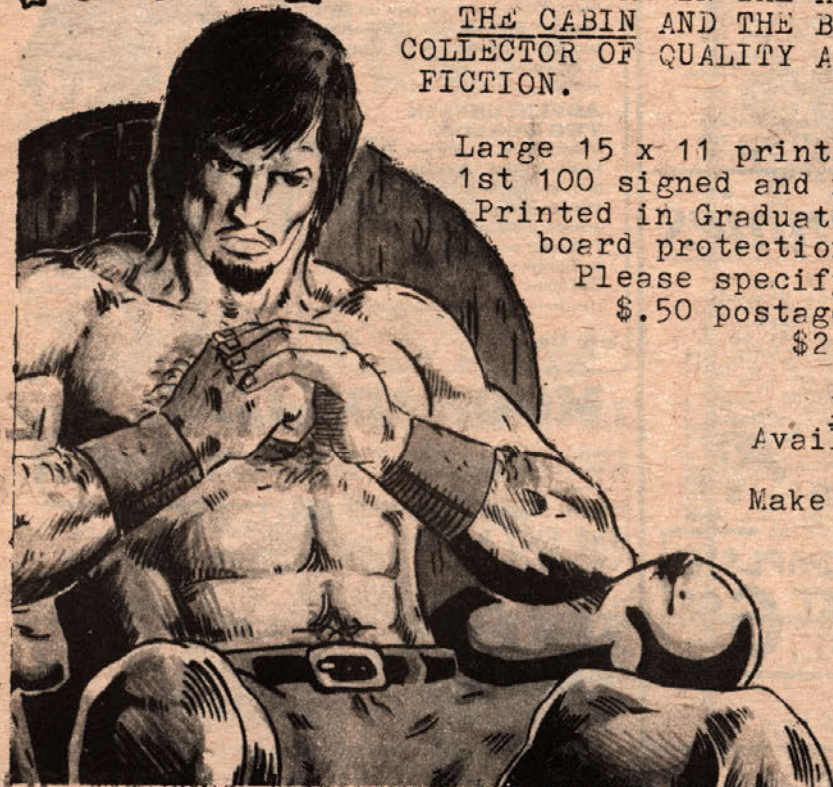
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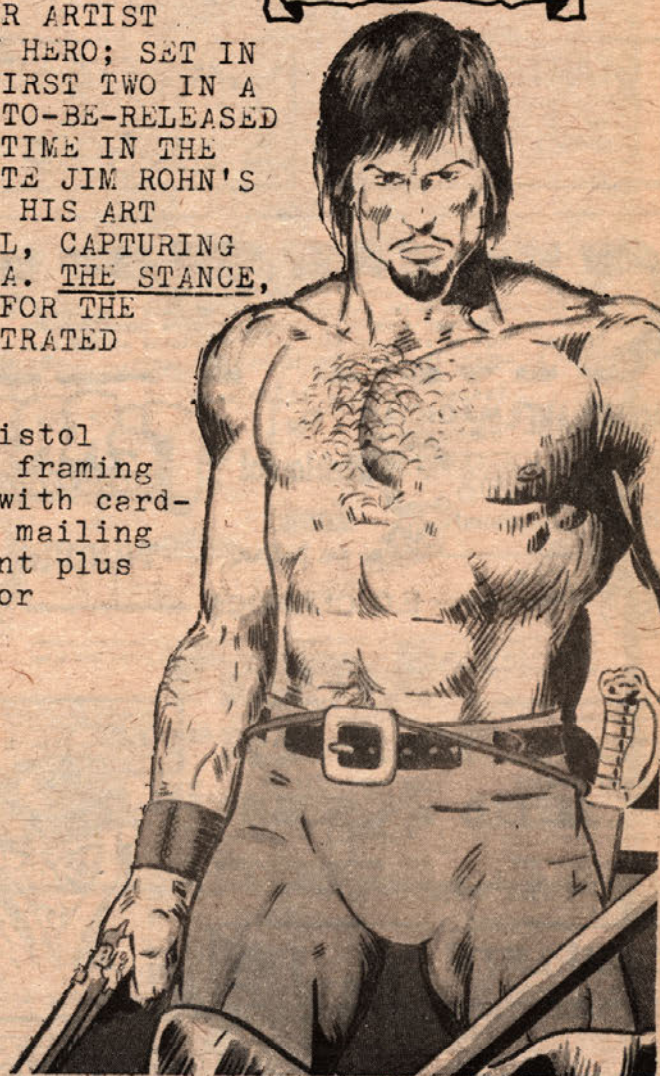
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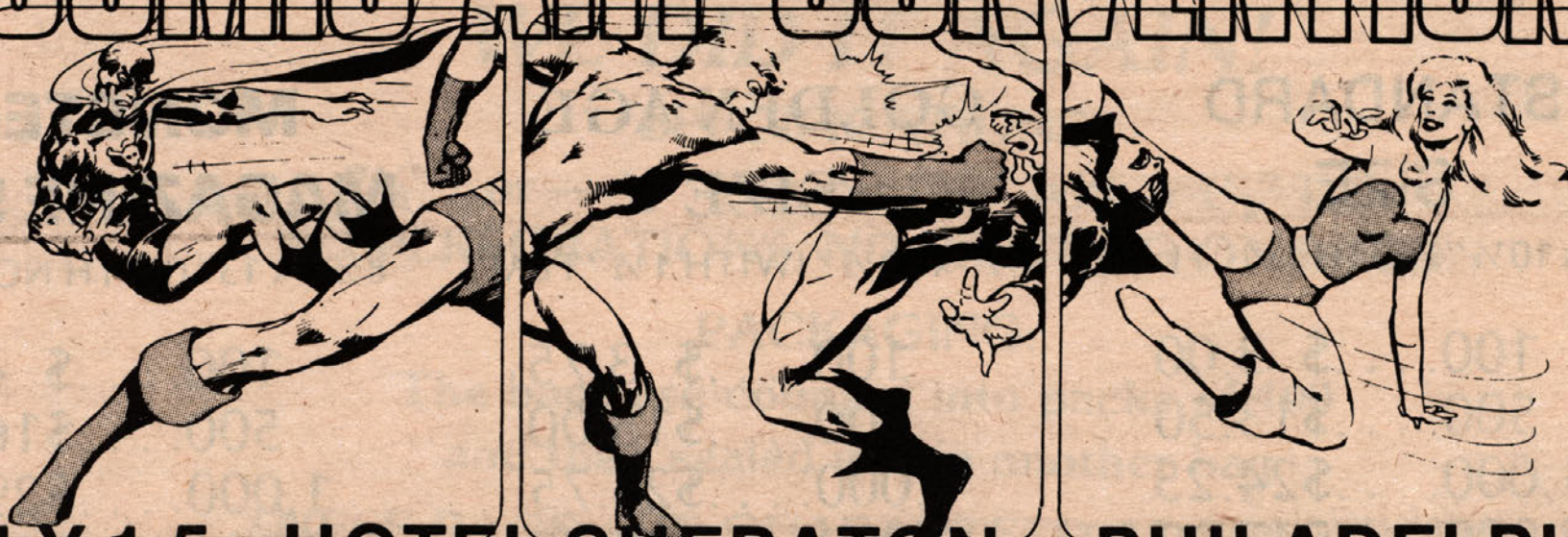


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WHEN AND WHERE WILL IT BE?

The Comic Art Convention will celebrate its Tenth Anniversary this year in Philadelphia — a shift from New York City because of the hotel space shortage there. And in the very lovely Sheraton Hotel, we have found an appropriately big and beautiful setting for this very special event. As usual, we will have exhibits of art and special projects, guest artists and speakers, panels, slide shows, a panoramic dealers' room, a costume parade (Saturday), auctions to fill your eyes and empty your pockets, a special costume parade on Monday for juniors (12 and under) with cash prizes just like the senior event, and even more to involve and bedazzle you! Here's what you'll see in the City of Brotherly Love.

WHO WILL WE GET TO SEE?

A special guest of honor will be Berni Wrightson, probably the finest talent and creator of the most popular artwork since these Conventions began. From D.C.'s *Swamp thing* to his work in the Warren magazine, from his fanzine work to his witty and macabre posters, Berni challenges the eye and the mind with his perceptions of the real and fantasy worlds. And with Berni Wrightson comes a display of his art. See the originals if you liked the reproductions!

Frank Thorne brought *Red Sonja* to exciting life, and continues to shape her destiny. His skills at making the improbable she-devil real have created a solid hit comic book for Marvel. Now his ideas on her potential real-life look have provided a sensational idea. A short while ago the Delaware Valley Comics Club held a convention in New Jersey, including a special contest to find a Red Sonja look-alike. The idea was so good and so popular, it will be held again at this July Con. All you girls can work on those costumes starting now! Cash prizes to the winner. Judges include Frank Thorne and Canada's Capt. George Henderson. (And something for every contestant). Come to participate, come to watch! Sunday, July 3.

Jim Warren began a publishing company in Philadelphia, and that company gave us *Creepy*, *Eerie*, *Vampirella*, *The Spirit*, and some of the best art and story to appear in comics. Jim Warren will be at the Convention to speak about those origin days in this city.

Jeff Jones will exhibit a selection of his fine canvasses and sculptures.

Mike Kaluta's work will be shown, from the *Shadow* to his book illustrations, and much in between.

Barry Smith will exhibit his newest material.

Jim Steranko will be present to keep us up-to-date on his work and the productions of Supergraphics.

And there will be other guests, a pantheon of them, to help us celebrate our first decade of entertainment and excitement. Watch for announcements as other guests confirm their appearances.

MORE, MORE, TELL US MORE.

Publishers, amateur and professional, will have new products to show. Kevin Provost will display a full-size, honest-to-Bode Cheechmobile! (Remember his miniature sculptures of Bode characters last year?). Dr. Thomas Inge will oversee a panel concerning the "Special Relationships between Horror and Comedy." We will have films every night except Tuesday. There will be hours of events daily, enough to pretty much guarantee there will be *more* than you can take in. And we are going to try to get slide show tours of the best comic book stores across the country. Hear that, dealers? Send us slides and your notes, and we will make your store a part of our nationwide "tour". Talk about flights into fantasy!

AND BEST OF ALL...

The special tenth Anniversary Edition of the Convention Program Book will be 8½ by 11 (not digest-size). It will be 100 pages, with a square-back binding. It will feature articles and pictures about our guests. It will present a book full of special illustrations by all the great comics artists. And the cover is a new, specially-commissioned painting by Berni Wrightson! Ask me how much it costs.

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Daily Admission will be \$3.00 (under 12 \$1.00.). A daily ticket can be purchased only at the door on the day of the convention.

Full Membership for all five days will be \$10.00. These tickets can be purchased by mail only until June 20, and the evening before the convention begins (that's June 30, Thursday) from 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Supporting (non-attending) Membership is \$2.00, and gets you a copy of the dynamite souvenir Program Book, mailed the day the Convention is over! The book will be widely sold at \$3.00 per copy following the Convention. (The \$2.00 price for supporting memberships ends July 5.)

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

The bus depot is across the street from the hotel. Philadelphia has two airports. It is on Amtrak. Write us for more details if you'd like 'em, including driving instructions.

Parking is *free* in the hotel garage across the street to all hotel guests.

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Each table is 6'x2½' and costs \$125.00. Discount of 10% on all tables when more than one is taken. Eight-foot wall tables are \$150, no discount. The ballroom is on two levels (second and third floors). I will send a floor plan if you request it. One admission included with each table.

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IT SURE WAS THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMIC STRIPS!

The 1930s saw the growth of a special entertainment medium: the adventure comic strip. Of dubious parentage (both the dime thriller and the movies were blamed), the lusty waif enjoyed no more than twenty years of fame before the onslaught of his own legitimate offspring, the TV adventure show.

Popular culture scholar Ron Goulart (known also for his prizewinning fiction) opens the yellowing pages of yesterday's newspapers, flipping past ancient front-page stories about dictators and New Dealers, to alight on the meaningful pages — the comic strips. Among those he brings back to life (helped by numerous illustrations):

BUCK ROGERS: As the 20s ended, Anthony Rogers went to sleep, to wake up in the 25th century.

TARZAN. The jungle lord was given a leg up by his chief chronicler, the amazing Edgar Rice Burroughs. But never forget the contributions of artists Hal Foster, Rex Maxon and Burne Hogarth (whose drawings of the titled apeman were displayed in the Louvre).

AVIATION STRIPS. Smilin' Jack, Tailspin Tommy, Skyroads, Scorchy Smith, Flyin' Jenny and Barney Baxter ("approved by the Junior Birdmen of America").

GANGBUSTERS. Dick Tracy, of course. And Dan Dunn, Secret Agent X-9 (created by Dashiell Hammett and Alex Raymond), Radio Patrol, Red Barry.

CAPTAIN EASY. Above and beyond its superior draftsmanship, this mock epic influenced many another feature.

FLASH GORDON. Drawn by Alex Raymond, perhaps the seminal and certainly the most admired of all strip artists.

THE WAY WEST. With the exception of Red Ryder, cowboy strips were inked by city fellers who had never thrown a leg over a saddle. One strip, in fact, was drawn by a New Yorker cartoonist.

Urbane, scholarly (chockful of actual interviews with Milton Caniff, Alfred Andriola, Roy Crane, et al.) and appreciative, *The Adventurous Decade* is a warmhearted, careful study of one of yesterday's innocent pleasures.

Some of the Very Special Pleasures in This Illustrated History of the Comic Strip's Greatest Years

- Rare strips, never seen before in any book: Jim Hardy, Bobby Thatcher, The Red Knight (the only superhero created directly for newspapers)
- Authentic Scorchy Smith strip by Noel Sickles (of course) plus Bert Christman (try to find his work in any book!)
- Sickles—for the first time—talks about Scorchy and about life with Milton Caniff on Terry & the Pirates
- *Art Treasures of America* (well, almost). Reminiscing about Hairbreadth Harry... Minute Movies... The Gumps... Vintage Funnies... Prince Valiant... The Phantom... Brick Bradford... Jack Swift... Skyroads... Little Orphan Annie... Annie Rooney... Frankie Doodle... Joe Palooka... Joe Jinks... The Spirit... Miss Fury... Don Winslow... Roy Powers
- The Way West. Yes, yes, there was the Lone Ranger. But do you remember Bronco Peeler, Tex Thorne and White Boy?
- Dan Dunn Sunday strip drawn by Alfred Andriola (Andriola himself has no sample of this strip!)
- Coulton Waugh—his last interview. Plus interviews with Caniff, Andriola, Roy Crane, Dick Moore, Mel Graff, Leslie Turner
- Tarzan Every Sunday. The jungle lord's newspaper adventures were more complicated than any encounters with pygmies or rogue apes
- Roy Powers strip, ghosted by the celebrated Frank Godwin
- Rare advertising pieces for Wash Tubbs and Terry & the Pirates
- The 500-Year Nap. How Buck Rogers went to sleep in the pages of *Amazing Stories* and woke up in the funnies. Plus career studies of Dick Calkins, Phil Nowlan and the other swell guys in the Buck Rogers engine room
- The Depression as Fertilizer: how the rich loam of the 30s nurtured the comic strips
- Cops and Robbers. While public enemies grimaced on the front page, the good guys pursued the bad guys back in the funnies: Dan Dunn, Secret Agent X-9, Radio Patrol, Charlie Chan, King of the Royal Mounted, even Inspector Wade of Scotland Yard

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I enclose \$1. Please send *The Adventurous Decade* by Ron Goulart at no further cost and accept my membership in the Nostalgia Book Club. As a member, I get to buy Club books and records about our happy yesterdays (1920-1955)—movies, music, radio, early TV, show biz, fads, fun—at discounts of 20% to 94% plus shipping. I get a free subscription to the Club bulletin, *Recollecting Times*, with data about new Club books and records plus news about fellow members and their hobbies. EXTRA! Personal service—just like 1939. No computers! My only obligation is to buy 4 books or records over the next two years, from some 150 to be offered—after which I'm free to resign at any time. If I want the Selection, I do nothing; it will come automatically about a month later. If I don't want the Selection, or I prefer one of the many Alternates, I merely let you know on the handy form always provided. I'll be offered a new Selection every 24 days—15 times a year.

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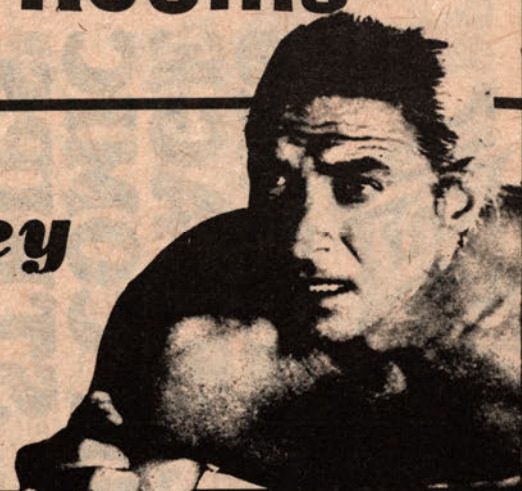


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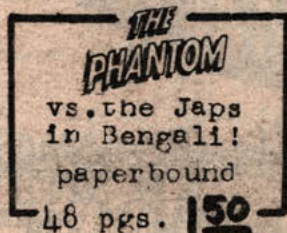
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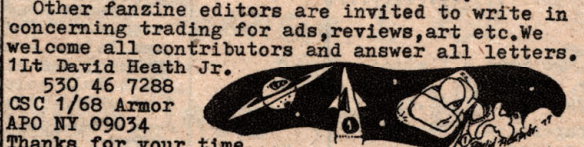
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SHEL DORF *and* The FANTASY MAKERS

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3 -

friends, he was outgoing, whereas I was the shy and introverted type and lived in the world of imagination. School was actually a snap to me. I sailed through it in eighth place in scholastic standing out of a graduating class of 256.

Dorf: What school was this?

Ackerman: Balboa High School in San Francisco. I interrupted my life in Los Angeles for eight years when dad had to move up to San Francisco. But when Alden was 17, 18, 19--around there--we began to have more of a relationship, and he came to a few meetings of the Los Angeles Science-Fantasy Society, and there was some thought of the two of us going into business together, running a science fiction bookstore--I'd be the manager and he would be the assistant.

Dorf: You mentioned your grandmother attending the showing of *Metropolis*. It seems that your family was very supportive of this interest, and in those days science fiction was considered kind of junk literature. Did they worry that you were rotting your brain reading this stuff?

Ackerman: My mother and father tolerated it. I don't recall if they ever frowned on it and said I shouldn't be reading it or anything like that, they just got a little concerned that I was collecting so much of it. After all, when they counted my magazines and found I had 27 magazines, they could extrapolate that if I kept on at this rate, by the time I was grown up, why, there might be a hundred magazines in the house! Why did I want them? What was I going to do with them? Would I ever read them again? And, also, you have to understand that it was in the depths of the Depression, and even though I was able to subscribe to *Science Wonder Stories* for twelve and a half cents a copy in 1929, in a way that was like giving a kid five bucks, I imagine, every time he wanted a magazine, because money was so tight.

Dorf: Well, you're a grown-up kid now, and as a grown-up kid, how many books and magazines would you estimate you have here in the Ackermansion?



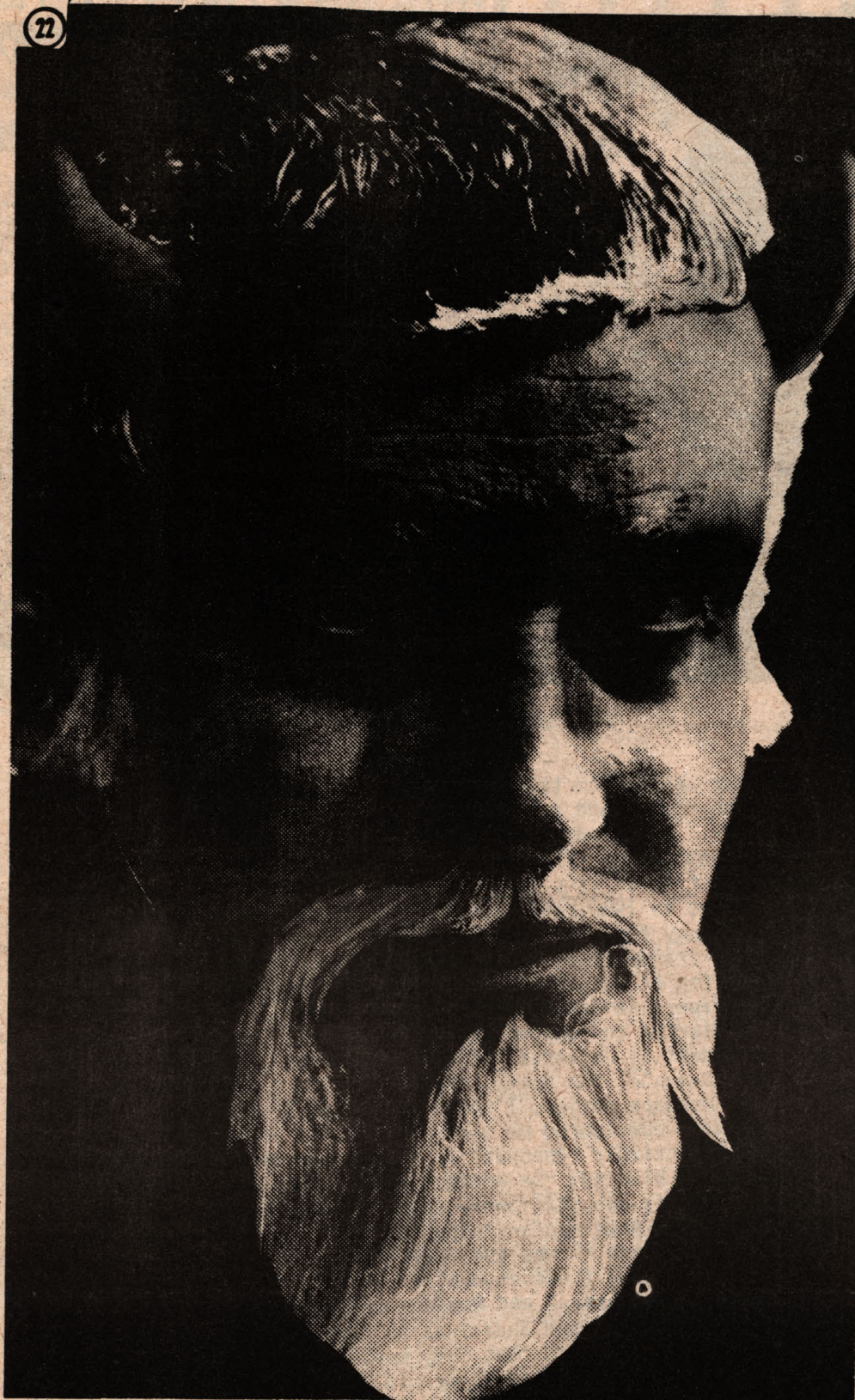
VINCENT PRICE with FJA

Ackerman: Well, I'm talking to you in a four-story home that has seventeen rooms, and approximately half the collection consists of stills. My grandmother, in 1930, started me on the road to ruin--bought me my first group of stills; it was from the great prophetic film of it's day, *Just Imagine*, 1930. We looked ahead fifty years to 1980, and Maureen O'Sullivan, the mother of Rosemary, of baby fame, was involved with a trip to Mars in that picture. My grandmother, for a birthday or Christmas present, got me about ten or twelve stills showing that magnificent super-city of skyscrapers in Manhattan in the year 1980, and I was on the way. I started corresponding then with Carl Laemmle, Sr., who was president of Universal Studios. As fast as I would see *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *The Mummy*, *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, plus all of these mundane movies, I would write him letters, and I guess he must have considered me the voice of the young American teen, because he actively responded to me and eventually gave me a marvelous carte blanche: He wrote a letter, the president of the company, on his own stationery, and, in effect, it said, "Give this kid Forry Ackerman anything he wants." I wish I had wanted the one-sheets and threes and pressbooks, but sound was just coming into films and I was enthralled at the time with the thought that after *Frankenstein* and *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and so on had played in town, and there was no more use for the huge discs with the sound on them, that they would give them to me. So I could take them home, wind up my old Victrola, put on a cactus needle, and for the next hour and a half it was like radio--I would hear the entire story of *Frankenstein*.

My grandparents were retired when I came along into this world, and they were just the right pair of grandparents for me. I couldn't have had a more supportive grandmother and grandfather. My grandfather was an architect, a monument to whose imagination survives in this town, called the Bradbury Building, which has nothing to do with Ray Bradbury. There was another Bradbury who made his money out of either oil or gold in Mexico toward the end of the last century. He commissioned the first million-dollar building in L.A., which my grandfather built.

Dorf: That's a remarkable building. I remember seeing that in the television version of "Demon With the Glass Hand."

Ackerman: Yes. In "The Night Strangler," the sequel to "The Night Stalker," what purported to be an underground city in Seattle was actually the interior of the Bradbury Building. It's appeared in the film *M*, and it was used in the Matt Helm TV series--it turns up all the time. My grandfather did the building under the influence of science fiction, you might say, because he had read the great novel of his day called *Looking Backward*, where a man was in suspended animation from 1887 to the year 2000. In one page of Edward Bellamy's classic it describes the interior of an office building of the twenty-first century, so that's what my grandfather based the Bradbury Building on. He did his best to capture a twenty-first century building with the materials of an earlier day. And I discovered early on that, in addition to his ability as an architect, my grandfather was quite a good artist, so I began describing to him men from Mars and Venus and future cities and war on Mars and all that sort of thing. I had quite a collection of pastels and watercolor drawings that he made for me, and I used him to dictate little primal stories to. Even dad helped out on that. In 1929 or '30 *Science Wonder Stories* had a contest. They had a cover showing what today looks to us like flying saucers, and the flying saucers (with tentacles) were flying off with the Woolworth Building and the Eiffel Tower, so I confidently entered that contest. I figured that Hugo Gernsback was going to be so staggered to get a story from a fourteen- or fifteen-year-old boy that it just couldn't fail to win. I wrote the story out in longhand, and Dad took it down to the office and had his secretary neatly type it out for me so it was in professional form. So I got support from Dad, too, but primarily my dear grandmother would read her voice hoarse on issues of *Ghost Stories*. I got interested in this monthly magazine before I really turned on to science fiction. Looking back on that collector's item today, I see that it featured stories by George Allen England, Ray Cummings, and other names that I later came to recognize as science fiction authors.



FJA IN MAKE-UP

Dorf: Of course, it's impossible to estimate how many people you have influenced to become science fiction readers and writers, not only through your projects as an agent and editor, but also through your magazine, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Now, to continue with the biographical data, did you go to college at all after high school?

Ackerman: In my day, in high school (I don't know if you can still do this) it was possible to go a fifth year, if you wanted to. You didn't get any credit or anything, but if you were in the mood and rolling along, as I was--I was in high gear in the fourth year in high school: I was editing the newspaper; I was the editor of the semi-annual publication for the graduating classes; I'd had four years of French, and felt I could go a fifth year and maybe take French two or three hours a day; and also shorthand. I don't think many men in this world take shorthand nowadays. Even then, I think there were only two other boys besides myself--all the rest were girls in my shorthand class--but I felt that it would be very helpful to me.

What I really wanted to do, and particularly considering how young I was--I think I was still fifteen years old when I graduated from high school--I wanted to take that extra year, not for any credit but just to really master shorthand and get a good grasp of French and particularly to continue editing the newspaper and the semi-annual album. But Dad felt I should go on to college. I opposed that mightily. All I really wanted out of life then was to get on my way as a writer. However, he made me a deal. He said, "After all, it's going to cost me quite a bit of money, but I'll finance you if you'll try college for a year, and if you feel that you're just wasting my money and your time, OK." So I went one year and was rather disappointed in the university at Berkeley that they didn't have too much to offer in the way of journalism. They really didn't have any all-out journalism class. I took some sort of an English class, started up German, took philosophy, paleontology, was involved with military training that I detested, and at the end of a year I did, indeed, feel . . . oh, particularly because in the English class, I remember the first thing that we did: The S. Fowler Wright novel *Deluge* had just been translated to the screen, and I think the first thing we were ever asked to do was to play newspaper reporter and review this film. So I turned in a review of the film and as I recall I got an A on it, and I thought, well, if I'm starting at the top, if I get an A already, what else is there to learn? I seemed to have a facility with words--the thing to do was just to start writing. I had imagined at an early age that I

was going to make a living as a science fiction writer, and I became disappointed in myself when I began searching my mind and expecting that the great novels would come forth. I wanted to be another H. G. Wells or Stapledon--I had very high aspirations for myself.

Dorf: Did you spend many hours at night behind the typewriter creating your own stories?

Ackerman: Well, going back to high school--we got out at ten past three, as I recall, in those days, and by about four o'clock I was at home and at my typewriter, and was corresponding with 117 boys and girls that I'd found all around the world at that age who were interested in science fiction. Mainly I was a great letter writer.

Dorf: This is right at the core of your skills--a letter writer.

Ackerman: If you look back at the first *Science Wonder Quarterly* in 1929, the very first letter in there was from myself--that's what started the whole thing. And for the next ten years, together with Jack Padaro, the two of us just dominated the letter-writing departments of all the science fiction magazines.

Dorf: Is that still being done today? The great letter columns?

Ackerman: No. They have one in *Analog*, and Ted White's magazines, *Amazing* and *Fantastic*, but I think the great days of the letterhacks are gone. There's nobody who just religiously writes in every issue and gives their opinions.

Dorf: I'm not really familiar with that many people in science fiction, which is why I chose you as a subject for this column, because basically TBG is comic-oriented, but the fields do cross over quite a bit, especially nowadays, when there's a bonanza of science fiction stories . . .

Ackerman: You said the magic word, "comics." At the second World Science Fiction Convention in 1940, I clearly recall meeting Shuster and Siegel of Superman fame. We were already known to each other because they had put out five issues of a mimeographed publication with the generic title of *Science Fiction*. I had had, I recall, at least one story in it, and, I believe, a couple of interviews. I think they started out seriously in the pages of *Weird Tales* magazine. They had little classified ads before they dreamed up Superman as a character. I think they had some notion of--I don't know exactly what--something like the Rosicrucians, or something of that sort, of creating a kind of superman cult--that you could be better than you were by applying various techniques that they would tell you about.

At that second World Science Fiction Convention the great space opera author, the late Doc Smith, Edward E. Smith, was very much alive, and we had a masquerade in which he came as C. L. Moore's character, Northwest Smith, another great spaceman. I

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE -

OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP - DON POST, CHRISTOPHER LEE, FJA, RAY HARRYHAUSEN AND VERN LANGDON BOTTOM - GEORGE PAL, WALTER J. DAUGHERTY, FJA, FRITZ LIEBER



FJA WITH A DRAWING DONE BY HIS ARCHITECT GRANDFATHER WHEN HE WAS JUST A CHILD. THE MOST PRIZED POSESSION IN HIS COLLECTION.



was there in kind of a combination of a futuristic costume from *Things to Come*, with a bit of Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon panache to it, and I suddenly got a sci-fi sort of notion: I said, "Tell you what we're gonna do. Let's all of us in costume band together. We'll walk through the streets of Chicago; we'll go to the office of their principal newspaper, and leave it to me from there on in." I had a little gimmick in mind. So a couple dozen of us turned up as spacemen, bug-eyed monsters, people of the future, and so on--in all of our glittering costumes--in the outer offices of the principal Chicago newspaper. I was the spokesman; I went into the editor's office and explained to him that we were time travelers. I said, "We've come here from the future. We just left tomorrow and we noticed in tomorrow's newspaper that you had a nice big photograph of us, and an interview, so we realized we would have to come to your office tonight to have the picture taken in order for it to be published tomorrow, when we saw it." They got a kick out of that and took our picture and interviewed us.



Dorf: Comics and science fiction have been at least first cousins for the last forty years.

Ackerman: Toward the end of 1929, Buck Rogers began to appear in what was then a two-cent-a-copy newspaper in Los Angeles, the *Los Angeles Record* I think it was called, and I cut out the first strip on the first day and took a little old-fashioned black photograph album and pasted that strip in and I went on strip by strip . . .

Dorf: Now you're getting into my territory. I've been collecting comic strips for the last thirty, forty years. But as I started to say, I'm not too familiar with science fiction fans. Has there been anybody else who started out as, say, a contemporary of yours, who has done so much and has really stayed with science fiction fandom and movie fandom as long as you?

Ackerman: Well, I think we might instance Donald A. Wollheim. Wollheim was, oddly enough, excluded from the very first World Science Fiction Convention. There was just some teenage politics going on there where the three chaps who were responsible for the convention in New York were on the outs with six others. I believe Frederick Pohl was one of them, and Robert Lowndes, but I know that Wollheim was already a big name in 1939 as a fan. Wollheim has many claims to fame personally. He edited the first of all science fiction pocket books, which was simply called *The Pocket Book of Science Fiction*; he was the first to write a definition of science fiction into a dictionary; he was the editor of the entire line of the *Avon Fantasy Reader* and the *Avon Science Fiction Reader*; for twenty years or so he was the mastermind, the editor, behind all the science fiction for Ace Books; and for the last about five years he's had his own company, DAW paperbacks, which specializes in four or five science fiction books a month.

Dorf: It seems to me that there have been so many successful science fiction writers or editors that have started out as youngsters and have just grown up with it.

Ackerman: Harry Harrison was another who started as a youngster. There's a classic case of Charles D. Harig, who, at the age of seventeen, was offered the editorship of *Wonder Stories* by Gernsback, and his classic response was, "I'll have to go home and ask my mother and dad if they'll let me."

Dorf: You and your contemporaries have been in the forefront of established American science fiction. You've gone into translating--actually creating and enlarging a market for it, and increasing its world popularity.

Ackerman: I brought Perry Rhodan to this country. That is a thirty million word science fiction serial. Eight hundred novels have appeared on the life and future of this character Perry Rhodan. He differs from most space heroes in that he is the peace lord of the universe, who goes around the cosmos trying to correct situations, and has proved so popular that ever since he started in 1961 in Germany, there's been one book a week published about him. It began to fan out throughout the world. France took up on it and started translating and the next thing we knew it was in Holland. Then it turned up in Japan. But the great German dream was to have it read in America. At the time of this interview there are 107 pocket books on sale of Perry Rhodan, and I work about ten ahead--I'm up to number 117. Wendayne, my wife, and her brother, and a third party, the science fiction author Stuart Byrne--the three of them worked on translating the series, and I do the editorial content. I retrieve forgotten stories from the past in what I call the "Time Vault," and then I give a couple of new authors an opportunity to break into print. Steven J. Utley first appeared, I believe, in the pages of Perry Rhodan. So I've been instrumental in bringing the science fiction sensation of Germany into print in America.

Dorf: What's the author's name--the author that writes Perry Rhodan?

Ackerman: Well, there is no single author. At least twelve collaborate on it. They get together every six months and outline the next half-year of Perry Rhodan's activities, and then they split it up between themselves, knowing the pace at which they can turn one out. Two men have been with it ever since the beginning: Walter Ernsting (he writes under the pseudonym of Clark Darlton), and . . .

Dorf: Have you ever talked to Ernsting about his motivation in starting these books? Are these people who grew up in wartime Germany and realized the horrors of war and then . . . Do you think that might have influenced the creation of Perry Rhodan?

Ackerman: Certainly Ernsting did. He's a very peace-oriented person. Unfortunately, I think he wound up in a Russian concentration camp for many years. He's well-educated in the earlier, Golden Era of science fiction in America. He loves the great space operas of Doc Smith and John Campbell and . . .

Dorf: Throughout the years there have been many close-knit groups of science fiction readers. What do you think is responsible for this close bond?

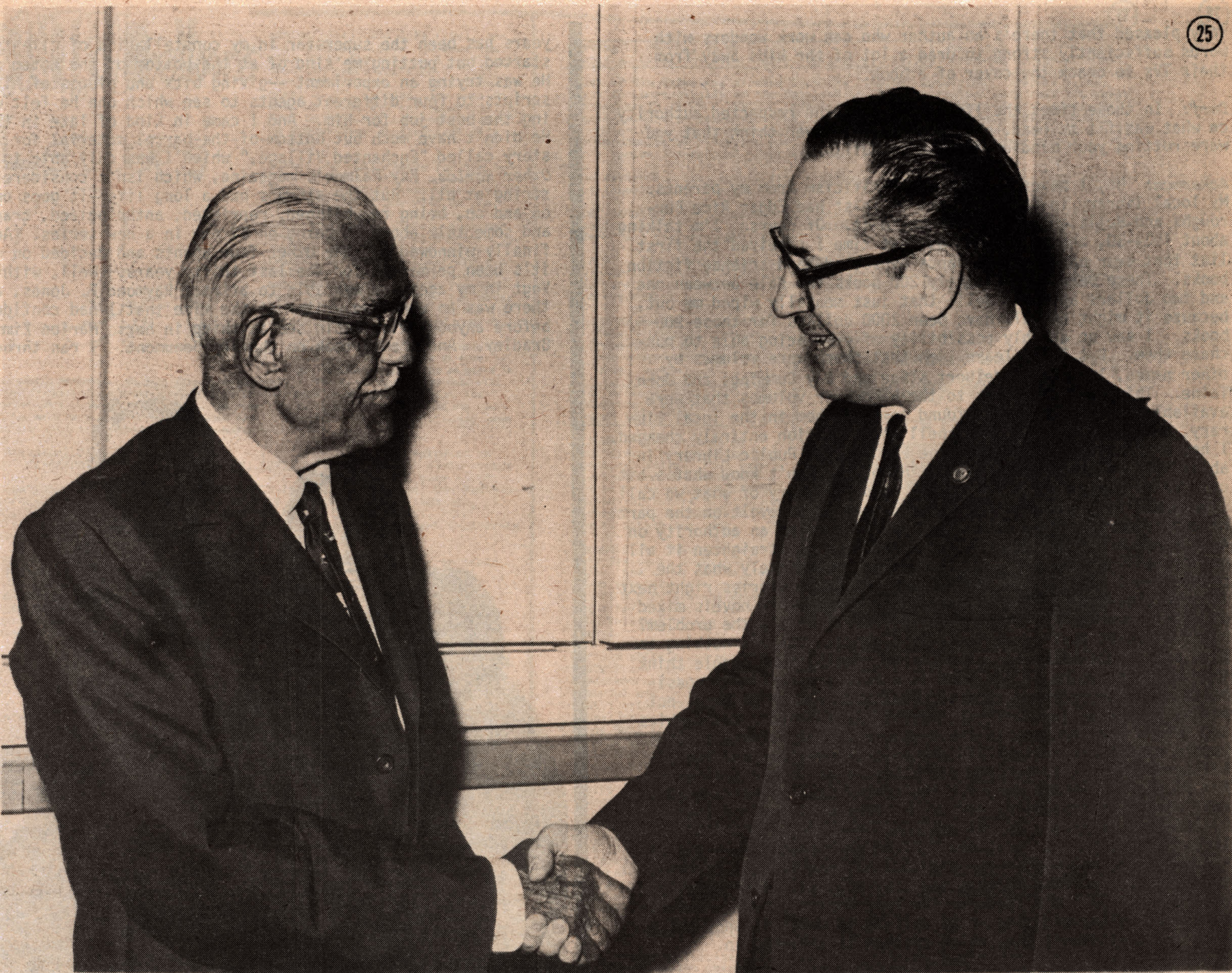
Ackerman: Well, I would say it's a continuing line from the earliest days. You know, to be a science fiction fan in the thirties was to be the resident crazy at your high school. You sort of wore an invisible dunce cap and everybody sneered at you--ridiculed your ideas: "Oh, no. Nonsense! Man is never going to the moon"--and here it happened 31 years sooner than the wild imagination of little Forry Ackerman had predicted. I always had an inner conviction that the minds of men like H. G. Wells and Olaf Stapledon and S. Fowler Wright and Hugo Gernsback and so on--they were men ahead of their time, and that eventually, as we've seen happen with the coming of television and computers and rockets to the moon and off to Mars and so on--these were minds ahead of their time, and I felt as saying many years ago, "It's a proud and lonely thing to be a fan." We felt part of a community of minds ahead of our time, and now today, when science fiction is practically on postage stamps, over 800 books just published last year--there's more science fiction than you can keep up with just reading the reviews of all of these books and seeing the movies and tuning in on TV. You have to make decisions: Are you going to look at *Dr. Who* or *Space 1999*, because they're on simultaneously.

Dorf: Did you have your feelings hurt very often by people who couldn't understand what science fiction was all about?

Ackerman: Oh, yes. I even got into a bitter argument one time with an English teacher. We were to review a book, and we had to have the teacher's authorization on any title, so I brought her four or five and she would have none of them. I think, in particular, that she told me Edgar Rice Burroughs was total trash and if I'd come back in about five years, when I'd matured a bit, I would agree with her. I made a point of going back five years later and telling her I hadn't changed my mind, and I've lived to see a local school that not only has an Edgar Rice Burroughs club, but they actually teach a course in Edgar Rice Burroughs and are

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE -

OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP - FJA WITH BORIS KARLOFF BOTTOM - BEING MADE UP FOR A TELEVISION TALK SHOW WITH WILLIAM TUTTLE



Very pleased that there's an author who can work wonders with words sufficiently strong to drag a lot of the kids away from their TVs to crack the cover of a book.

Dorf: In those times the librarians were the respected authority on what was fit to read. Did your parents ever think that you were rotting your mind reading this stuff?

Ackerman: No, I never had any such criticism from my parents. My local library in San Francisco at least had Edgar Rice Burroughs and Wells and Poe and Verne in it. Of course, I'm talking about 1929-30, and just about at that time I received the first list that ever came into my hands of second-hand science fiction books. There were approximately 200 books for sale between one and two dollars apiece. Well, that just mentally wiped me out, because it might as well have been 2000 dollars for those 200 books. I saw no earthly possibility of ever being able to purchase them. But I did learn then that there were volumes by other names, like Otis Adelbert Kline and Ray Cummings and John Taine. This opened my eyes to the hardcover volumes that were available, and I sought and found some of them in the local library, and after the big bomb spell the situation entirely changed. I had a call from the head of the Los Angeles Public Library in about 1947 or 1948 and she said, "Help! We don't know what's hit us. We've always had a collection in our library of what we call 'improbabilia,' and suddenly there's sort of a revolt on the part of our readers, and we understand you're sort of an authority on this subject. Would you come down and help us straighten it all out?" Well, I came down and I could see immediately what the problem was. They would have volumes of ghost stories right next to interplanetary stories. They would have gothic novels mixed up with Jules Verne. And they said, "Well, what's the problem? Isn't a rocket just as unlikely as a ghost? There's nothing to pick and choose between." And I said, "Well, some people think that a rocket going to the moon is a little more likely possibility than there being ghosts. What you need to do here--not making any value judgments--I, myself, like fantasy and zombies and things that go bump in the night, but pure science fiction people want their rockets and prehistoric monsters and invisibility inventions to be completely separated in one section. And if they're in the mood for the spooky stuff--the supernatural, occult, metaphysics, and so on--they want to find that in a different section. So all you have to do is put FANTASY in large letters in one territory. I can go through here--zip zip zip--like the roadrunner and pick out all the fantasy for you and leave the science fiction and everybody will live happily ever after. So I did that for the L.A. Public Library, and for many years afterward they would call up in doubt if they got a book and they didn't know which section it belonged in.

Dorf: Isn't the term "science fiction" kind of a pigeon-hole term? It's really limiting in the understanding of the genre. I mean, in science fiction there's romance, there's psychology--relationships between people--there's history, along with the science aspects of the stories. It seems to me, as with the term "comics"--when someone says, "You read the comics," there are a lot of adventure strips that are not funny. They're thrilling, exciting, but they're not funny. They wouldn't be termed "comics" yet they're stuck with the term "comics" because everybody knows that as the media. It's a symbolic word rather than a descriptive word. Would you say that the term "science fiction" would have the same problem?

Ackerman: Well, I don't regard it as a problem. It's got fifty years of usage behind it. It's like the "flicks." They used to flicker. They don't flicker anymore, but you don't even stop to think about it when you use the term "flick." And I think at this late date there have been efforts to try and get rid of "science fiction" and call it "speculative fiction." But I think you have a real hard row to hoe there. "Speculative fiction." That could be about Wall Street. It doesn't, to my mind, grab the mundane imagination--tell the tale as quickly as "science fiction." The second you hit "science" people are alerted; they're thinking things like *Star Trek* and *Planet of the Apes* and *2001* and Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon. We get the whole idea. You have to start all over fifty years later and start trying to reeducate the public to "speculative fiction," and then, as inevitably happens, we weary of saying a mouthful like "speculative fiction" so the next thing you know you cut it down to "spec fic," and that isn't the world's most pleasant sounding couple of words.

Dorf: Could you give me a capsule account of what your life was like before *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, published by James Warren, became such a phenomenal success, and how your life is after *Famous Monsters*?

Ackerman: When I got rid of three years, five months, and twenty-nine days of World War II and wound up a staff sergeant, I was weary of taking orders--being in the command of other individuals--and I wanted desperately to do something where I was captain of my fate and master of my own nonexistent soul, and in searching my mind I thought, "Now, wait a minute. I've been published, I mastered the English language--I got a straight A in it for four years in high school and went on to college for another year--and I know all the authors, I know the editors, I know policy. What else do I need to be an agent?" So I hung out my shingle, and the first year, as a man of 33 or 34 years old, I took in \$1075 in commissions on what I sold and expended \$1025 dollars on postage. So I wound up with a big fat fifty bucks for my first year's effort as an agent. I would not have been able to continue if Uncle Sam hadn't come to the rescue of us ex-GI's at that time and for one year gave us something like \$30 every Thursday to help us get back on our feet. But by year two, A. E. Van Vogt, who for about 30

years has been the superstar in my constellation of clients--he started out putting me kind of at the bottom of the totem pole. He was trying an experiment --giving bits and pieces of his manuscripts to four different agents to see which one he felt was doing the best job for him. And I came in kind of late in the game. He didn't have much but bottom-of-the-barrel material for me: a story called "Enchanted Village," which I was only able to sell to *Other Worlds*, Ray Palmer's magazine, which isn't considered first string at all. But the story's had a long life--it goes on and on and on, being republished, reprinted, anthologized, translated, and some talk about it being on TV now in a new series. And Van finally winnowed out the other four agents and decided on me, and it's been permanent for the last thirty years. Well, with Van Vogt in my agency I was able to attract Raymond F. Jones, and there was an upcoming writer at the time that I had confidence in before anybody else could see anything in her: Marion Zimmer Bradley. And then I took on Charles Beaumont. I ran through



FJA WITH "LOGAN'S RUN" CO-AUTHOR GEORGE CLAYTON JOHNSON.

72 manuscripts, I believe, with him before we sold a single word, but I had great confidence that Beaumont would be my Bradbury. And finally, at a penny a word, I broke Beaumont into print with a story called "The Devil You Say."

Dorf: I first saw Beaumont in the pages of *Playboy*. Did you arrange for those *Playboy* articles?

Ackerman: Yes. There was his "The Crooked Man" and "Dark Country" and a series of articles that he did. Yeah, I broke him into *Playboy*, *Esquire* . . .

Dorf: Did you negotiate what he earned for the stories as well?

Ackerman: Yes.

Dorf: I'd love to know what the guidelines are for something like that. How do you know what to ask for a story?

Ackerman: Well, in the beginning we were so thrilled just to be in the pages of *Esquire* and *Playboy* that we didn't give them any argument, saying we don't think it's enough. As a matter of fact, *Playboy* did a most remarkable thing, I think, in publishing history. It came at Christmas, and they voluntarily sent a bonus. There was a letter saying, "Well, we're getting tired of lugging all this money to the bank, and we can't think of anybody better than Beaumont since he has done so well for us, and we're so enthusiastic, and so here's a Christmas bonus for you."

So, anyway, before *Famous Monsters* I think I was representing finally around 100 writers. That was a very trying time. It's a wonder to me that I didn't have a heart attack, or a series of heart attacks. As you may or may not know, on the way to my fiftieth birthday, which is now ten years behind me, I had a whole flock of heart attacks over a period of about 48 hours, and I think a lot of that had to do with my agenting days, when I felt like I was a puppet on a string being pulled in a hundred different directions, because there were a hundred writers all bidding for my attention. And they'd think nothing of . . . say, Sunday night at 12 o'clock I would get a call and an author would say, "Help! Save my life! I've been sitting here all day staring at the typewriter. It's staring back at me. I've got a mental block here. I want to read you this. I've got this character in this situation, and how do you suggest I get going again?" And that's really not what an agent is responsible for. He should

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE -

OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP - FJA ON THE SET OF THE NEW KING KONG
BOTTOM - Left, with William Castle, Right, with Elsa Lanchester



take the finished product from the author, read it, evaluate it, determine in his mind where you can make the most money, and see if it has possibilities for translation or radio or television or movies--all the commercial aspects. The author should be the creator, and then the agent should take over and be the businessman. But I found, in reality, that many authors would use me as a wailing wall, as a marriage counselor, as a psychiatrist, as a bank--want to borrow money ("Don't you think in three weeks or so we'll surely sell that story, so will you advance me 100, 500, a thousand bucks?"). So, I tell you, that was a terribly trying time. The only thing I really enjoy out of being an agent is when I can pick up the phone and inform someone somewhere in the world. And one time I did it with my own two legs. I made the first sale for William Nolan and I called and talked to his mother, who said, "Oh, he's at a movie theater." She called there and checked that he'd be getting out about 9:30. So I drove over to the theater, and as William Nolan came walking out I went around shouting, "Author! Author! William Nolan! William Nolan! Check for William Nolan!" He was pop-eyed. It was the greatest moment of his life. He's never forgotten when he got his first acceptance, and I get about as much thrill from a nice check for an author for a translation sale or something unexpected like an anthology. Those are the rewards for me of agenting, but it does have the other side--all the neuroticism of authors and their desperation. The authors call up and say, "Lie to me! Lie to me! I've gotta tell my wife some fantasy here. Tell me you think you've got a sale to *Esquire* coming up."

So I had built up a sufficiently successful agency as far as the monetary rewards went, although in my entire life I don't feel that, having set my path to the stars, I've made the amount of money out of whatever talents I have that I could have if I'd taken other paths. For instance, during World War II I befriended many individuals who wrote for personalities on radio and television, like Red Skelton, Groucho Marx, Jack Benny--all the great humorists of the time--and they seemed to feel that I had a bent for that, and time and again they would say, "If you survive, if we all survive, when it's all over, come and see us. We'll put you to work. You'll be writing for the comic personalities." That kind of appealed to me, but other people said, "Oh, God! You'll be gobbled up. You'll be drained dry. You'll just be one of a team of five, and it means going out on the golf course and palling around and drinking and carousing" and all sorts of things that really didn't appeal to me. I said, "I can be creative if you just set me behind my typewriter and leave me alone, but not if I've got to get involved in pools and parties and Beverly Hills and orgies and all sorts of stuff." Again, I felt if I might have gone into New York, into advertising campaigns and that kind of thing . . . so many times I see billboards and I say, "My God! I threw that gag away for a nickel a page in *Famous Monsters* fifteen years ago."

As an agent, I picked up a poor man's *Playboy*, called *After Hours*, which was edited by one James Warren, then totally unknown to me, and I submitted some fantasy stories to him, as most all of these men's magazines use a bit of science fiction and fantasy, and I found myself engaged in a very witty correspondence with this young editor/publisher. We began to get more amusement out of just gagging it up with one another--rapping back and forth between Philly and Hollywood--that it didn't matter too much whether he bought anything or not, although he did buy. Actually, I talked him into his fourth and final issue being a science fiction oriented one. I wrote a feature called "Scream-O-Rama Is Here," which, if you look back on it, was sort of the basic beginning of the pattern for *Famous Monsters*. I did an article also for that issue called "I Was a Sci-Fi Addict."

I met up with Warren face-to-face in New York toward the end of 1957, and he caught on fire on the notion of doing a monster mag . . . that's a story in itself--it would take another hour . . . but you want to know if it changed my life in any radical respect. Most definitely. When I did the first issue of *Famous Monsters* I didn't even think of it as an issue--neither of us did. We thought of it as a one-shot. It would be lucky if he didn't lose his shirt on it. We had no notion of continuing. But at the end of four days, and the magazine didn't go on sale simultaneously all over the country--it was just on sale in New York and Philadelphia--a negative factor was that there was a terrific snowstorm in New York, so the publisher was afraid that nobody was going out for *Life* or *Look* or *Playboy*, let alone our crazy messed-up faces magazine, but he called at the end of four days and he said, "My God! I've been getting fifty fan letters a day! I got 200 letters in four days, just from New York and Philadelphia! And every one of them says, 'More! More! More! When is the next issue out? How do I subscribe?'" He said, "I think we should strike while the iron is hot. Have you got enough material for a second issue?" I said, "Jim Warren, you don't know me very well. I've got enough material for a hundred issues. As a matter of fact, if, to my great surprise, I reincarnate and come back into this world again, I can carry on life after life. It can never end. I've got enough if I don't add anything. I've got 25,000 stills. Yes, I can go, go, go!"

Well, when *Famous Monsters* took off and began coming out six times a year, nine times a year, every month . . . then we added *Spacemen*. Then he started up *Wildest Westerns*, and I began writing for that as "Far West Ackerman," and then he did *Screen Thrills*, and more and more I got involved. I saw--maybe my clients didn't know it, but I felt within my heart--that I wasn't doing justice, for instance, to the work of Marion Zimmer Bradley. She was at midway point now. She was beginning to catch on. Marion would send me a manuscript and suddenly I'd realize, "My God! That's been on my desk for three weeks. I haven't even had time to read it." Maybe the same thing is happening with other agents, I don't know. Maybe they're all off drunk at the saloon or playing golf or maybe they're not doing any better job, but frankly I don't feel that I am able to do the proper job for a

hundred writers anymore, so I radically cut it in half to about fifty, and after a while down to twenty-five, and it finally got down to just about a dozen that I would always hang on to: Van Vogt, Beaumont, and people who were really making a meteoric rise. To this day I have a number of hard-core clients. I represent the Ray Cummings estate and the works of Stanley Weinbaum and L. Ron Hubbard, and of course Van Vogt and so on. But with my right hand nowadays I'm busy doing nine issues a year of *Famous Monsters* and twenty-four issues a year with my left hand of Perry Rhodan, and with my middle hand I'm still representing all the authors. There is Donald Glut, for instance.

Dorf: Don Glut has a background in comics, hasn't he?

Ackerman: Oh, yes! He's done very much for *Vampirella*. There's my claim to fame in comicdom, by the way: I created *Vampirella* in 1969 in an airplane flying down to Rio de Janeiro with George Pal aboard and A. E. Van Vogt and Robert Bloch and Yvette Mimeaux and Roman Polanski. If that plane had gone down it would have wiped out half of the science fiction world. But I dreamed up *Vampirella* and her twin sister, *Draculina*, and the planet of blood flowing in the rivers and the twin suns and the whole schmeer on that.

Dorf: You say Don Glut had a hand in writing these?

Ackerman: I don't know if Don did any of the actual *Vampirella* stories, but they always have four or five subsidiary stories per issue and he did plenty of those--and for *Eerie* and *Creepy*--and for Gold Key he created his own character, Dagar. I sell pocket books for him, like *Bugged*, and his dinosaur dictionary has done very well at Doubleday. Now, I like to take a new talent like Glut and work with him and build him up and make him into one of my prime authors.

Dorf: So your time these days is spent being an agent for a dozen authors, plus being editor and publisher of *Famous Monsters*, plus editing the Perry Rhodan series.

Ackerman: And that is all the means to an end. The end is the Ackermuseum. So whatever money I make out of it goes into maintaining this place. Of course, it's going to take until about 1998, at the rate I'm going, to pay off the mortgage. I see no hope of ever retiring. When I'm about 84 years old, I'll still have to be turning out Perry Rhodan books and *Famous Monsters* to pay for this hungry dinosaur here. When it's finally paid for . . . well, already I need more room. If I could wave a magic wand, I'd like to add about a \$25,000 addition to this just to house everything.

Dorf: Well Forry, I'm sure there'll always be an audience for your efforts, too. Thank you very much for giving me this time today.

Ackerman: You're quite welcome, Shel. . . . Can you hear that hand clap on tape?





BEAUTIFUL BALLOONS #59 is a monthly column from Don & Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor, OH 44060. It is a mixed bag of opinions, news and reviews with letters from our readers providing a counterpoint to our own views. Feel free to write us (that's why we always include our address). We'd really like to get more humorous cartoons about comic-book and comic-strip characters and/or fans. You'll find a couple by Alan Hutchinson and Jean Michele Martin this time which are good examples of what we like. We could also use some headings for reviews and letters—we are well-stocked on heads for the column itself at present.

MISCELLANEOUS In our last column, we listed some of our doings which take up much of our time, including an offhand remark about taking care of two children. Within five hours of our typing that comment, our four-year-old Stephen fell from a chair and broke his collarbone. He's all right, but we spent an entire evening that had been scheduled for writing BB visiting doctors and hospitals for X-rays and care. The death of one of Don's nephews in an auto accident took up and is taking up considerable time and energy as well. These facts are mentioned for the benefit of those who think we have nothing to do but read comics and express opinions. Oh, yes, and the Literary Guild sent a very nice apology and a refund and we have rejoined. We are quite happy about this, as it is one of the better book clubs. **CHARLTON** We are told by a usually reliable source that Charlton is coming back—minus their licensed books. Apparently Charlton was losing money on the Hanna-Barbera titles and the temporary suspension of publishing gave Hanna-Barbera time to make other arrangements (the H-B books will be distributed by Marvel but no Marvel writers or artists will have anything to do with them) and Charlton can now resume publishing without them. Not that we are suggesting that that's why Charlton suspended publication, but it certainly did work out nicely, didn't it? **RON GOULART NEWS:** Upcoming books include *Nemo*, a science fiction novel from Berkley in May; *Challengers of the Unknown*, a novelization of the DC comics characters, from Dell in November; "somewhat in the Avenger style with intrigue and monsters in South America," says Ron; a "Gypsy" novel in the Weird Heroes series, *Eye of the Vulture*, is due around October from Jove (formerly Pyramid). In addition, he has one due out from DAW early next year (title not yet certain) and is working on one for Doubleday. "Also, 'did a quickie for Ace and am the only person besides H.G. Wells to ever write a book entitled *Island of Dr. Moreau*.' Based on the script for the forthcoming film. Pennname on this is Joseph Silva (who is a cousin of my future freelance Jose Silvera)." On the stands right now is *The Emperor of the Last Days*—to help you spot it, it's the one with Flash Gordon on the cover.

FORGIVE US, MORT WALKER We just discovered we have been using the wrong typing element and have been using too-small type. Pardon.

ASININITY LIVES! Several months ago, we printed a snotty, ignorant and condescending note from Newsweek which was sent out in response to complaints about Peter Prescott's snotty, ignorant and condescending article on science fiction. Well, whoever wrote that note is apparently working in the subscription department of Galaxy, a faltering SF magazine. We got this note when our sub expired: GALACTIC CLOCK WINDING DOWN. TRANSMISSION OF FUTURE COPIES GALAXY MAGAZINE SUSPENDED HEREWITH. CREW WILL MISS YOU - ASIMOV, KORNBLUTH, [Kornbluth died some 20 years ago; talk about bad taste!], POHL, POURNELLE, STURGEON, BLISH [he died more than a year ago!], SABERHAGEN, ET AL. BELIEVE YOU WILL MISS THEM TOO. ALTERNATE POSSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING CONTACT: MAIL RESPONSE ENVELOPE ABOVE INDICATING TERM OF CONTINUING COMMUNICATION, TOGETHER WITH YOUR CHECK. WE WILL MAKE SURE YOUR SERVICE REMAINS ACTIVE WITHOUT INTERRUPTION... RESPOND TODAY! COMPUTER TRACKING CENTER, GALAXY HEADQUARTERS. Needless to say, we will not be resubscribing.

LIGHT READING Alan Light, peerless publisher, sends the clipping at left and says: "Rick Best (the editor) and I mailed issue #14 of FILM COLLECTOR'S WORLD on Friday, April 8. It took three pick-up truck trips from the printer to the Post Office, and totaled about 100 bags. All seemed to go well until I sat down to read Saturday's paper and found the enclosed photo on the front page. Those were our mail bags that fell out of the truck into the street!"

"Some quick checking confirmed my suspicions, and I was told by the postmaster at Rapids City that the moderate-sized mail truck got all our 100 bags into his truck along with all the regular mail from his route and that the truck's back doors 'have trouble locking.' I just hope the Post Office got them all (as a publisher, things like that are the stuff nightmares are made of)."

Unscheduled delivery

East Moline police officer Lewis Wingerter hefts one of three bags of mail which fell from a U.S. Postal Service truck at 13th St. and 7th Ave. Friday night. A citizen called police to pick up the three bags. When last seen, the mail truck was headed down the street, doors swinging wide. (Dispatch photo by Terry Herbig)

X-BURY—a group of Yalie mutants by Jean Michele Martin



PULITZER REPORT The Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning went to Paul Szep of the Boston Globe.

PLUG George W. Bacher, Box 19340, Cincinnati, OH 45219, has several copies of Philip Jose



Bob Greene

Take a look at those four creeps in the picture. Try not to

retch.

Now think of Superman, Batman, Captain Marvel.

Well, the boys in the picture are about to replace Superman and the others in your children's galaxy of comic book superheroes.

That is correct. The four painted and bejeweled lads in the picture are a rock-and-roll band called Kiss. The band works very hard to build an image of pagan degeneracy. At least one teen-ager has already died in an effort to "be like Kiss."

And the folks at Marvel Comics in New York have determined that the children of America are ready to accept Kiss as authentic comic book heroes. For the first time, comic book heroes with magical powers are being modeled after real people — i.e., the four members of Kiss — and the first Kiss comic book is in its final stages of preparation.

"Superman and the other old superheroes are so pristine, so virginal," said Steve Gerber, the Marvel Comics editor in charge of the Kiss project. "They are so clean and wholesome and good. Once a kid gets past the age of 5 or 6, he can't relate to that kind of hero. Not in today's world. The old comic book heroes are so clean in a world that's so filthy. That's why the Kiss comic books are going to work and be such a hit."

A FEW WORDS ABOUT KISS, the rock-and-roll band: They are four men who wear women's makeup and dress like 21st Century transvestites. The appeal of their music is straight-out sex; about the most subtle thing they do is scream at the audience, "I Want You." One of the band's members, whom nature has endowed with an unnaturally long tongue, laps it toward the audience throughout their stage show. During the show the band also vomits blood and breathes fire. The kids like them a lot.

"I think the way that Kiss behaves on stage is the way most of us would like to express ourselves in public," said Gerber, the Marvel Comics editor. "Not just kids — adults, too, who work straight jobs and can't be like Kiss because of social pressures."

The Marvel people are totally convinced that, by transplanting the members of Kiss from real-life humans to comic book heroes, a massive market of American children will be served.

"We're talking about 5- and 6-year-olds on up," Gerber said. "These are the children who love Kiss."

There is, indeed, evidence that Kiss fans do identify rather

Farmer's novel *Fire and the Night* for \$3 each, postpaid. This is NOT a science fiction novel but is quite rare. It was published by Regency Books, a publisher long out of business and copies of the book have been selling for as much as \$5 a copy. Harlan Ellison was the editor at Regency and the cover is a quite striking work by Leo & Diane Dillon.

TV NEWS NBC-TV, now in the unenviable cellar position occupied for many years by now-frontrunner ABC, is trying desperately to come up with some winners. Its two most successful shows have been hit hard by death and desertion (Freddie Prinze of *Chico and the Man* committed suicide and Redd Foxx of *Sanford and Son* has signed with ABC). NBC is preparing pilots for 22 comedy shows and several other types of show. (Fans of NBC's *Saturday Night* may recall a satirical promo for three new shows, *Mobile Shrink* (a psychiatrist goes out into the street to help people), *Black Vet* (he's black, he's a veteran and he's a veterinarian) and *The Three of Us* (a comedy about a ménage à trois, two women and a man living together). Well, ABC has been trying out a revolting sitcom called *Three's Company* which must have been inspired by *The Three of Us* and NBC is considering for the fall a show called *Stoner* which sounds like a cross between *Black Vet* and *Mobile Shrink*; the program description reads, "A young black doctor goes out into the streets to help people." On the brighter side, NBC plans a series based on the very funny movie *Hearts of the West*, written by Larry Gelbart of *M*A*S*H* and *Bay City Amusement Company* which is a blend of the first *Dick Van Dyke Show* and *Saturday Night* with unknowns playing the parts of four people (Dick Van Dyke, Mary Tyler Moore, Rose Marie and Morey Amsterdam types, modernized and younger) who write and perform for a show much like *Saturday Night*. It is an idea with promise. And a new version of *Laugh-In* will be offered with an all-new cast and all-new writers in a series of six specials.

CONS & SHOWS There will be a comic book and card show at Akron's Summit Mall, 3265 W. Market St., Akron, OH, June 4 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (dealer set-up anytime after 7:30 a.m.) —contact Jim Kovacs, PO Box 262, Canton, OH 44701 (216-454-6466) for details. We plan to be there with a table; please stop by and say hello if you're in the area.

The San Diego Comic Con will be publicized in Playboy's "Potpourri" section, in an item written by Jackie Estrada. That con will have some really great guests — mentioning only people we have never met but would like to, Stan Lynde, B. Kliban, Gilbert Shelton, Jim Starlin, Stan Lee, among others. Robert Heinlein will be there, too. We understand Heinlein will be at a lot of conventions this year, along with a bloodmobile, urging fans to donate blood. [Heinlein has a rare blood type and was saved by donations from the Rare Blood Club a few years ago—he has devoted a great deal of time since to promoting blood donations in general and rare blood clubs in particular. Incidentally, we understand he is hard at work on a new novel, despite what we were told by those who attended the world SF convention in Kansas City last year.] Jackie and Dave Estrada have edited a very fine SF anthology cum textbook, *THE FUTURE OF BEING HUMAN: PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENCE FICTION*, published by Canfield Press. The only problem is that there is no price anywhere on the book and so we can't tell you how to order it. If Dave or Jackie contact us on the price, we'll give it a full-scale review in a later issue.

DC NEWS DC will be publishing a series of all-new tabloid-size comics, starting with *Superman vs. Wonder Woman*, due out July 7, a 72-page story written by Gerry Conway and drawn by Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez & Dan Adkins. There will be five more tabloid originals in the next year. **THE TEAM-UP** of the Justice League, Justice Society and Legion of Super Heroes will run 67 pages, a two-parter in *Justice League* #147-148. Sensibly, the number of characters is being held down, only four or five from each group participating. Script is by Paul Levitz and Marty Pasko and the art is by Dick Dillin and Frank McLaughlin. First half goes on sale July 7. **SECRET SOCIETY** of Super-Villains #10 (both on sale July 28), a two-part story running 51 pages, Gerry Conway wrote the story and the art is by Arv Jones & Bill Draut (Super-Team Family) and Dick Ayers & Jack Abel (Secret Society of Super-Villains).

Several of these sound pretty good, though we are not rabid about the art of Dick Dillin or Dick Ayers. While complaining, we must mention we don't care for Paul Levitz making Wildcat a "dese, dem and dose" character — let us not go out of our way to turn a character into a stereotype. But we are enjoying several DC's these days.

INFLATIONARY NOTE Probably by the time you read this, Marvel comics will cost 35¢ each. What bothers us most is that the interval between price increases is growing shorter. Comics cost 10¢ for about 25 years. They went from 12¢ to 15¢ in about five years, from 15¢ to 20¢ in about three years and from 20¢ to 25¢ in about two years. The jump to 30¢ came in about 18 months and the jump to 35¢ followed that by a year or less. All these times are approximate, since we don't have the time to check it more closely, but the approximations give a pretty good picture of what we're up against. We seem to be heading toward a monthly price hike.



HEROES FOR TODAY'S world, the rock group Kiss. "Little girls don't believe in Dick and Jane," says the man developing a Kiss comic book. "They will embrace" Kiss.

Isn't this going to damage the possibility of making Kiss comic book superheroes?

"Not at all," said Gerber. "I mean, let's be realistic. How old do you think these groupies who go to rock concerts are? They're 14, 15 and even younger. They're the very people who will be buying the comic books. I mean, we're not in the 1950s anymore. Little girls don't believe in Dick and Jane."

Gerber admits that Kiss may appeal to "the basic qualities of human nature," but he feels that this decadence will not hurt the sale of the comic books, but will enhance it.

"The kids will not merely accept the Kiss comic superheroes," he said. "They will embrace them."

And the parents?

"At first the parents' reaction will be total revulsion," Gerber said. "Then they'll just shake their heads in disgust and go back to watching Happy Days."



U.S., Cuba negotiate 200-mile fishing limit.—News item

Family Doctor
Support Varicose Veins
—Vote YES on Issue 3?

30 Beautiful Balloons Letters

Credits and such: The clipping at the bottom of the page is from the March 12, 1977, Phoenix GAZETTE and was sent to us by Joe Moore. The lettering to the left is by Larry Dean.

Merlin Haas, P. O. Box 41
El Paso, Illinois 61738
[April 6, 1977]

It's mind-boggling to realize that you've been doing BB longer than you did your old newsletter, NEWFANGLES--58 installments. Quite a feat.

My enjoyment of BB has increased in the last few months after hitting a low point last fall, when you came out with that snappy tirade against God, Country, and the Post Office. (Which hit close to home. I've been working in the El Paso Post Office for nearly four years: permanent part-time as clerk, substitute city mail carrier, emergency substitute rural carrier, sub bookkeeper, you name it.)

But that's old stuff, and the last few issues have had more of the old Thompson Touch.

It does make

are usually offered and numbered as they become available.

Old radio shows are really neat and cheap, too, with 1800-foot, 4-track reels (6 hours) available for only \$6-\$10 each. Lots of entertainment. (I trust you know that Stan Freberg had a program that ran for 15 shows during 1957? Really neat stuff.)

I'm glad someone else has noted that the printing quality of comics has been declining lately. My hangup is incorrect cutting. It used to be easy to find nice, correctly cut covers which had the spines neatly aligned with the edge of the front cover. It's nearly impossible to find any now.

You very rarely see Golden Agers with that sort of defect, even on the schlock brands like Rural Home and Superior. But I really have to scour the stands to find well cut copies of the few comics I do pick up. What ever happened to quality control? At 35¢, surely comics should have good printing!

Hey, do you think you could get Bill Blackbeard to comment on the Hyperion series for BB?

P.S. Thanks for the plug on El Paso back in November. Charles Schreck, the rest of EP fandom, is married and working in an ad agency in Chicago, so I guess I'm all of EP fandom at the moment.

Why do we bother with comics? We like 'em. We like some more than others, obviously, and we get bored with the boring ones--and so on. But they're fun and an artform that is seldom considered one, even after all these decades. Things run in cycles, and there are times when few titles on the stand interest us particularly. But there's always some nice moment to be found in the month's comics. (Heck, we sometimes get a good laugh out of the bad moments.) We do edit letters we get (including yours)--and we try to improve the grammar, spelling, etc., when we can. I don't think it's very often that we insert errors, anyway... Many thanks for the clippings! Actually, the jerky articles are sometimes of interest--in that they show us all the way the rest of the world looks at us. Grisly, ain't it? We'll be glad to run any comments Bill Blackbeard would like to send in for running (the non-libellous ones, anyway)--but many of his comments on the line were, we suspect, included in Hyperion's catalogue. And many, many thanks for the fascinating tape you sent (MEL BLANC b/w LEONIDAS WITHERALL)! We'll run a review at some point of the WITHERALL radio show, since it's a show based on one of our favorite mystery series.

Jim True, 509B Village Road West
Princeton Junction, New Jersey 08550 [April 14, 1977]

price of comics and how young children can no longer afford them. This is really not a valid argument. Back in my formative years (when Wonder Bread was building my body in 12 important ways), I received a weekly 50¢ allowance. With the help of my kindly local fountain owner, I spent it each week on three

There has been a lot of talk recently about the increase in the

There Will Never Be A Bakshiland

By BILL JONES

Ralph Bakshi is one of the most ingenious and innovative movie animators today, but to call him another Walt Disney would be a comparison which might cause a Mouseketeer insurrection.

While both Bakshi and Disney have made brilliant contributions to the field of animation, the two cartoonists have less in common than one might think.

Disney created Mickey Mouse, the fun-loving little rodent of innocence; Bakshi created Fritz the Cat, a lusty, leering feline with rampant sexual appetites. Disney won the hearts of children, young and old, all over the world; Bakshi won a landslide of scathing reviews and the wrath of a nation. Disney built a movie studio empire; Bakshi can hardly scrape together enough pennies for his next enterprise.

Disney built two of the world's biggest amusement parks... but there will never be a Bakshiland.

The 37-year-old producer-writer-director is nonetheless one of the most self-satisfied men in the world. He is doing what he does best, drawing pictures, and he's drawing them the way he wants to.

With his latest production, "Wizards," his reputation as a producer of X-rated cartoons ("Fritz the Cat," "Heavy Traffic," and "Coonskin") is undergoing a change. "Wizards" is a PG-rated fantasy feature about two warring brothers in the year 200,000 A.D. It's fast becoming Bakshi's most commercially successful effort.

In a telephone interview from his studio in Los Angeles, Bakshi said "Wizards," a \$1.5 million production which took 18 months to make, is the "highest-grossing animated film ever... so far."

He described the picture as a collection of images which he has carried around in his head for years.

"Basically, what I think everyone does in animation is to relive everything they wanted to do when they were younger. I don't think I've had a new idea in the last 10 or 15 years. When you start in this business you have a zillion ideas that never get printed or published because you're too young. Then you spend the remainder of your life, you're lucky enough, just doing your old ideas."

He laughed. "So, in that sense, I'm probably 30 years behind the times."

Bakshi was a late-bloomer in the cartooning business. Born of Russian parents and raised in a Jewish-Italian-Black ghetto area of New York, he was preoccupied with the usual ghetto shenanigans until a high school guidance counselor suggested he try his hand at drawing. It turned his life around.

He laughed again. "If I were a Jesuit revivalist or something, I would have gotten a calling. I mean, when you go from being a non-artist to an artist in the turn of a day, for no apparent reason, it's very strange..."

After graduating from the High School of Industrial Arts in Manhattan, Bakshi went to work for CBS Terrytoons where he became the youngest animator in the business, and later the youngest director and studio director.

The producer developed an early affection for writers like Kafka and Dickens, early turn-of-the-century illustrators, and for comic book illustrators in particular.

"A good comic book illustrator is a potentially good film director," he said. "They have to move a story. A page of a comic book has to move swiftly. The cartoonist has the same problems the film director has: long shots, close-ups, angles. That's basic, but how they do it with taste and judgment is what counts."

Throughout his career Bakshi has striven to experiment with new styles and techniques in animation. Now, with his own studio and his own staff of artists, he has the freedom to act on his ideas.

"We break rules," Bakshi said of his own studio operation. "I mix styles, which is supposed to be a no-no... I use a lot of watercolor backdrops. Other animators paint very opaquely, which I detest. Watercolor... is like a stained-glass window: when the light shines through a piece of film it illuminates everything, because watercolor's a transparent. I've been using watercolor as a base medium since I started."

Another animation no-no, which Bakshi ignores, is the use of little background color.



The animated cartoon "Wizards" is a departure for artist Ralph Bakshi. From upper left: the characters of Blackwolf and the Scoobydors, the Fairy King, warrior elves and Avatar



and Elinor have earned the production a "PG" rating. It represents a significant departure from the "X" rating of an earlier Bakshi work, "Fritz the Cat."

"Basically, what I think everyone does in animation is to relive everything they wanted to do when they were younger. I don't think I've had a new idea in the last 10 or 15 years."

"The old theory in animation is that, to see the characters you have to subdue your backgrounds. That's crazy, because characters move, and as long as something's moving, you'll see it. So I use a lot of reds and blacks and heavy contrasts..."

But perhaps the biggest taboo to be ignored by Bakshi is that tacit but traditional view which relegates animated films exclusively to the arena of children's entertainment. Bakshi believes it was this notion which caused censors, critics and the general public to come down so hard on "Fritz," "Traffic" and "Coonskin."

"I think everyone over-reacted, both in the ratings and in the audiences. I think I hurt a lot of childhood sensibilities."

But Bakshi believes the ice is broken now, and that more and more adults are beginning to accept animated films with adult themes.

"Wizards," they tell me, is getting a lot of college adults. Eventually, I think more adults will go to see animation."

Indeed, until now, "college adults" have been the bulk of the Bakshi audience, but Bakshi himself said he does not focus on any "market" when he begins a project. His only aim is to do something which will satisfy him.

"You have to do it because you enjoy it. Otherwise, how could you spend 18 months on it?"

In his 24 years in the animation business Bakshi has learned well the technology of his craft, but he claims that the unique visual sense of his pictures is the result of direction, not technology. In "Wizards" a film which used 800,000 cels (drawings on celluloid) and background drawings, he effectively combines live action film footage with animation, a feat which involved "a hundred complex technological steps." But the craft, he said, is knowing "when to get off a scene and when to get off it and when to cut to a scene and how to use it when you cut to it."

Choosing his artists is also an important part of his "directional function," he said.

"I hire artists who are temperamentally with me anyhow. It's like if Toulouse-Lautrec were running an animation studio, he would hire Cezanne, Van Gogh, Renoir. He would hire the guys who have an affinity for what he does. He would not go out and hire Rembrandt."

Advanced technology is not really all that helpful to the modern animator, Bakshi claimed. "It gives you certain tricks, but the basic-form of animating, which is taking background and drawing hundreds of thousands of drawings to move the characters, hasn't changed. That's where the cost always has been, and that's where it is today."

Bakshi said he and his staff of artists are faced with the problems which confront major studios, but are forced by a small budget to make certain sacrifices.

"When we animate we use everything. We're not those other guys yet who can afford to throw out whole sequences if they don't like them. If I threw out whole sequences I didn't like, I'd be throwing my studio out along with the sequences."

But, ironically, not having the money or the corporate backing of some of the major studios doesn't make Bakshi's outfit artistically shy by any means.

"We're always going to be poor," he laughed, "and just on the verge of going under, which is why we'll always have to be good at what we do."

The producer attributes the invention and originality of his films to the closeness between himself and his crew, most of whom are Disney, Warner Bros. and MGM drop-outs who have been with Bakshi from the start.

Bakshi and his artists are presently at work on their most ambitious project to date: an animated version of J. R. R. Tolkien's "Rings" trilogy.

"It's a very, very, very, very difficult film," Bakshi emphasized. "It's the heaviest thing I've ever seen in animation. Every scene's a major sequence. There's nothing



Ralph Bakshi's latest animated venture is "Wizards," a story of two warring brothers in the year 200,000 A.D. The picture cost \$1.5 million to produce.

minor, and that requires so much energy on the guys' part. This one's going to require an army to put together..."

But it is that kind of hard, tedious work that attracts Bakshi to animation in the first place. It is that kind of energy, he said, which keeps animation a "pure art."

"It goes back to the old masters. It goes back to Rubens when he had a studio full of 200 guys helping him to finish a painting. In the middle of this crazy society we're living in, where everything is so hyper and mechanized with IBMs running around the country and executives pushing each other around, we (he and his staff) sit here in a medium that's 2,000 years old, as far as I'm concerned, and we worry about the same things that other artists have always worried about: how do you draw the arm, how do you draw the leg... And that's beautiful."

one wonder why, with all the good stuff around and especially with your chronic lack of time, you still bother with comics. I've pretty well given up on comics in general, having stopped buying all the garbage Marvels about three years ago, because I couldn't stomach the areas of turgid text covering up most of the art. And with the insane artistic combinations Marvel insists on using (Mooney/Ploog, for instance), it wasn't very hard.

So I went with DC for a while. But not much there, either. Last comic I really enjoyed was the Simonson Metal Men issues. The Ditko/Wood stuff was sort of nice to look at but lacked enthusiasm. Or maybe I lack enthusiasm. I couldn't even get overly excited about Howard the Duck, a good concept bogged down with endless captions. Hasn't anyone at Marvel learned that the idea is to tell a graphic story, not just have illustrated text?

Too bad Charlton went under. At least, their stuff was readable. Now if they'd only gotten someone else to print the stuff...

I should congratulate you on printing the Hyperion Press catalogue, but I see all these goodies that just beg for my money. I've been a Blackbeard fan ever since you included a copy of the JOURNAL OF THE V.F.B.M. (remember what the initials stand for?) with NEWFANGLES #20 and know that any strip reprint series he edits will be well worth the money. The formats seem perfect and are what I would expect, as I remember Bill writing many times about how the perfect reprint series should be presented: one full year or episode at a time, so subsequent titles would pick up where the first left off to form a complete record of a strip.

I think I'll send a few postcards to Hyperion to send the catalogues to the local libraries. Our own public library (formed with a Carnegie grant, by the way) is very well stocked for a town this size (2500 pop.) and is quite broad-minded in its buying of material. They bought both the Nostalgia Press THIMBLE THEATRE and FLASH GORDON hardbacks and, I hope, will buy a few of the new Hyperion items.

As you say, the material will have varying historical and entertainment values. The Segar Popeye book will obviously be superb both ways, and I'm looking forward to it, since I have seen only short excerpts of the material. Hot stuff. I hope the next Popeye book will be the Plunder Island 1934 Sunday sequence, which Blackbeard called the best story of the whole Segar epoch. Again, I've only seen scattered pages and, again, hot stuff!

Without prior viewing, I would say that POPEYE THIMBLE THEATRE, CONNIE, Winsor McCay would fit most TBG readers' tastes, while SHERLOCK THE MONK, BOBBY THATCHER, MINUTE MOVIES, and JIM HARDY would appeal to the adventure fans. POLLY & HER PALS, BARNEY GOOGLE, and ABIE THE AGENT are good strips, but the years chosen are so early that the image normally created by the mention of their names isn't what you get. POLLY and BG, especially, don't hit their peaks until the later '20's, and I wish that the first volumes had been from that era.

But I quibble. I'm going to buy them all, some (like THIMBLE THEATRE) even in the expensive hardback versions and in the paperback. One to keep and one to read.

I sure hope they keep at it.

One note to your question on how much a year's run of POLLY & HER PALS dailies would cost: The last batch I bought (which were from the late '20's) ran about \$30 a year.

Loved the LoC's in BB. While some hash over the same old ruts, many of your correspondents come up with some unusual viewpoints. I seem to get the impression that the average BB reader is older and wiser (?) than the average comics fan.

Or maybe your editing is tighter than that in other fan pubs.

Bad move, your saying you 'love SCADS of clippings,' as I have a dozen or so enclosed. How in the world do you file these things so you can find them? Personally, I'm not too big on clippings, with the exceptions of good obituaries (like the one on Russell Patterson), as most mundane articles on fans seem to dwell endlessly on the fact that "Myron Muscovy of Big Twig, Maine, has almost 1000 comic books with some worth almost a dollar each!"

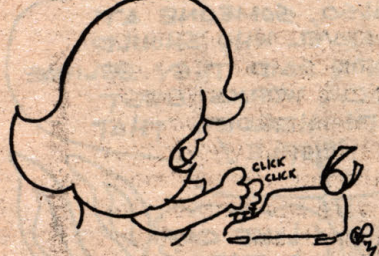
Who needs that?

I'm amazed at these letters from guys who think Kirby can write competently. Kirby's good at concepts and such but needs to be under the sharp eye of a strong editor in order to keep his excesses (overuse of raw action, unfinished subplots) under control.

Very glad to see the review of TUNE IN YESTERDAY, as I've gotten into old radio lately (buying reels of programs and doing some dubbing for a friend who's trying to start a "married order cassette business") and have been on the lookout for a good reference book. Most catalogues are fountains of info, but there is no order to titles in most cases, since certain

BEAUTIFUL balloons

Letters



an automatic movement. We just flip speedily past... As we expect Mike Gold will comment in these pages eventually, though, if there were no ad pages in comics, the price wouldn't be anywhere near as low as 35¢. In fact, that makes an excellent question for Mike to answer for us: If there were no advertisements in today's comics, what would the additional subsidy by the purchaser have to be?

Glenn G. Hakanson, 2615 "Q" Street
Sacramento, California 95816 [February 28, 1977]

Knowing your interest in MODESTY BLAISE comic strips, I thought I'd pass along this information: THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (901 Mission Street, San Francisco, California 94119) is now publishing MODESTY in addition to SPIDER-MAN, DOONESBURY, PEANUTS, STEVE ROGER, GORDO, BROOM HILDA, CASEY, CATHEY, FRED BASSET, FARLEY, DENNIS THE MENACE, and leastly DICK TRACY. I thought California fans or even out-of-state fans might be interested.

Do you know whether COMIC MEDIA (the British fanzine) ever published an issue past #11 (December 1973)? They stopped in the middle of an MB reprint!

THE CHRONICLE is a paper that many fans may want to consider subscriptions to. (Fans with friends or relatives in San Francisco may want to ask them to provide a personal clipping service...) We, too, would like to know whether COMIC MEDIA is still running—or had any issues after #11.

Milton Knight, Jr., 256 Brooklyn Avenue
Westbury, New York 11590 [April 1977]

In a recent BB, you said you were cutting down on your purchases of comics due to price increases. I no longer buy new comics—not because of those silly prices but because of the absence of my favorite genre, FUNNY ANIMAL COMICS. The sole company that seems to be publishing any of quality seems to be Whitman—but their output is badly distributed. I can only buy them in their rare kiddie 3-in-1 packets. Oh, well—

I was fairly surprised you said nothing about the "new" Mickey Mouse Club TV show. Of course, it's syndicated, and I'm not sure if it's seen in your area. As far as I'm concerned, the program is fairly well done, although it probably won't pacify fans of the old club.

As we have often commented, Whitman is the company we'd most like to have complete control of comics for. The backlog of superb material is incredible; most of its staff apparently knows nothing about it—or about the personalities of long-time characters about which new stories are being created. We gather that a lot of the problems are due to an incredible chain of command which, among other things, keeps the line from a unified approach steered by the decades of knowledge that should be there. And no one outside the underground comics field has put out a funny, new "funny animal" joo. Oh, maybe NATLAMP—but that's on the fringes of the underground and uses underground talents. We must do a lengthy review of the new MICKEY MOUSE CLUB at some point; you're right. We delight in the cartoons MMC has; kids today get more Disney than ever.

Show-Biz Celebrities Are All Fair Game For Hirschfeld's Pen

Being Caricatured by Him
Confers Instant Status;
Hunting for Hidden Ninas

By M. G. LOMB

NEW YORK—For more than half a century, Al Hirschfeld has haunted theater openings from New Haven to California. Like the critics who gather on such occasions, Mr. Hirschfeld comes in search of the sense and substance of the shows he watches. But instead of words, he uses a few deft drawing lines to capture the spirit of the play and its actors.

The bearded, 73-year-old Mr. Hirschfeld is a caricaturist whose droll drawings of theater subjects have brightened the drama pages of The New York Times since the early 1920s. "Al Hirschfeld is the premier caricaturist," says humorist S. J. Perelman. "There's no one comparable to him."

Almost everyone who has ever ventured before the footlights has, at one time or another, wound up in a Hirschfeld drawing. And such is the cachet of being "done" by Mr. Hirschfeld that his subjects seldom mind that once he is through with them, their hair may look like a Brito pad or their jaw may resemble a finely honed ax blade.

"The man is a very distinctive artist," says actor Jack Lemmon. "He manages not only to get me, but also the character I'm playing. I've never looked at a drawing of him and felt that he missed somebody or that he picked a bad moment."

Movie Ads and Shower Curtains
Mr. Hirschfeld's work has appeared on record album covers, movie ads and even shower curtains. But his popular appeal hasn't diminished his credentials as an artist.

"Unlike most caricaturists, he gives us not just the drawing of a single person, but an entire, beautifully conceived work of art," says Lloyd Goodrich, former director of New York's Whitney Museum of Art, which owns a Hirschfeld drawing. Other museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Lincoln Center Museum of the Performing Arts, have his work in their permanent collections.

"His art will endure as art," Mr. Goodrich adds, "because of the sense of character, the beautiful graphic quality and the strong design in his caricatures. His portraits need no identifying labels; they are more the person than the person himself."

Mr. Hirschfeld appeals not only to art fanciers, but to those who like to hunt for his daughter Nina's name, which is always hidden amid the lines of each drawing. The game began in 1943, shortly after his daughter was born.

Mr. Hirschfeld was doing a sketch on a circus theme, and drew into the background a circus poster trumpeting "Nina the Wonder Child." He continued to hide her name in his drawings until, he says, "people were finding it even if it wasn't there."

He knew he was stuck with the gimmick when Arthur Hays Sulzberger, then publisher of The New York Times, suggested that he indicate the number of Ninas hidden in a given drawing, so that the name hunters would know when to stop looking. He continues the practice to this day, placing a small numeral beside his signature when more than one Nina appears in a drawing. "This Nina thing has taken on insane national proportions," he says.

Nina fans get annoyed when Mr. Hirschfeld's count is off, as it was in a recent drawing for Neil Simon's "California Suite." Hundreds of letters deluged his Manhattan studio, pointing out the error and requesting the original drawing as a reward.

A psychology professor at Temple University is using the Nina game to study how the eye works in spotting abnormalities in visual matter. Calvin F. Nodine, the professor, says that the game is a good way of financing his three-year study in the hopes of being able to train pilots to use their eyes more efficiently in detecting aerial targets.

"Somewhere we convinced them that finding Ninas in Hirschfeld drawings is parallel to spotting taps" from the air, Mr. Nodine says.

Mr. Hirschfeld considers himself a caricaturist, rather than a cartoonist, because his drawings derive their impact from pep strokes alone. "Cartoons exploit a literary idea," he explains. "The ideas in them are more important than the drawing. Caricatures provide an emotional response regardless of the caption."

Whenever possible, Mr. Hirschfeld draws from life. (Using photographs, "corrupts the drawing," he says.) He travels to out-of-town openings of plays destined for Broadway, sitting in the darkened theater sketching throughout the performance. "I make notations on outstanding things—big gestures and patterns of elythis, the way the hair moves when someone shakes his head."

Please Turn to Page 3, Column 1

8 THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 1976

Show Business Celebrities Are All Fair Game for Al Hirschfeld's Pen



Zero Mostel

Continued From First Page
he says. Back in his studio, he incorporates these details into a full-fledged composition, sketching in pencil and finishing up in ink applied with a quill pen or watercolor brush. Working each day from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the battered barber chair that serves as his drafting stool, he usually completes a drawing in a week to 10 days.

His favorite faces to caricature belong to those he calls "giggle-face actors." These are the masters of the expansive, theatrical gesture and powerful delivery, such as Orson Welles, Zero Mostel and Charles Laughton. "Giggle-face actors are explosive," he says. "They project to the last row in the last balcony. Every eye movement is a colossal affair."

Although he is best known for his theatrical caricatures, Mr. Hirschfeld also draws politicians, artists, scientists and just ordinary people. He seldom does background research on a subject before beginning to sketch. "My approach is all visual. If it's a political subject, then I'll look into the subject's opinions. In the theater, the characters are established by the playwright. He makes the heroes and villains—I try to interpret what he wants."

Among his recent noncelebrity subjects are the founder of a religious cult from California and a confidence man who served time in Leavenworth. "Every human in the world comes through here," Mr. Hirschfeld says. "I don't know what attracts them."

If being drawn by Hirschfeld is a status symbol, buying his drawings is an investment. There are three things I can count on to keep their value: diamonds, wine and Hirschfeld caricatures," says actress Carol Channing, who owns a collection of 31 "Hirschfelds, 12 of them of her."

Gallery prices for Hirschfeld drawings range from \$750 to \$1,500 for a black and white drawing, and can run as high as \$2,000 for a color drawing. Mr. Hirschfeld's own fees vary, depending on the use to which a drawing will be put. He charges more for advertising material than for a drawing that a client merely plans to display in his own home.

Mr. Hirschfeld grew up in St. Louis and studied at the Art Students League in New York City. In the early 1920s, he moved to Paris, where he lived on the Left Bank and attempted a career as a painter, returning home occasionally "for a clean shirt," he says. His fondness for line drawing began after a trip to Bali, an island where, he



Carol Channing

says, the intense sunlight forced him to see forms in black and white. "The sun bleaches out all the color," he says. "People become walking line drawings. I lost interest in painting because I became enchanted with line, and I'm still enchanted with it."

Even before he left the U.S. on his travels, The New York Herald Tribune had begun publishing Mr. Hirschfeld's caricatures. His contributions to The New York Times began in 1928, and became more regular after he returned to New York permanently in 1934.

"The Times tried to find someone to do these drawings with him on alternate weeks," says Brooks Atkinson, the paper's former drama critic, "but there was no one with Al's talent who knew the theater as well as he did."

Drawings reproduced by permission of the Margot Feldman Galleries, New York City, exclusive agents for Mr. Hirschfeld's work.

Irving L. Jacobs, P. O. Box 574
National City, California 92050 [April 16, 1977]

face of Tim Tyler was missing from the "family" gathering. I wrote to Mr. Byck for more details of the "demise" of TTL. He replied only that TTL began on August 13, 1928. PERIOD. Over and out. Surely, the end of a strip that lasted almost 50 years with the same syndicate deserves an in-depth report in BB or TEG. If Lyman Young, Senior, is still alive, I do believe it would be worthwhile to interview both father and son. Have they ever been invited to a comics convention? What are their future plans?

The father was (is) such a fine craftsman, though, in all candor, the son did not inherit all the right genes.

P.S. Another fine comic artists, now almost totally forgotten, was (is) Brandon Walsh. Am I the only fan with fond recollections of Annie Rooney and "Zero" and the cruel Mrs. Meaney?

P.P.S. (Same theme, different field.) Does anyone out there recall the fine pulp artist Rudolph Belarski, who did yeoman work for the old weekly ARGOSY? (He executed a beautiful new cover every week. And some artists cry that they are overworked.)

We do remember all the characters, artists, etc. you mention—but we don't know the current status of any of them. Readers?

Rick Norwood, Box 51576
Lafayette, Louisiana 70501
[March 18, 1977]

I rush to the defense of Jack Kirby, though he hardly needs defending. Your comments remind me of those who call the work of Harlan Ellison or Robert A. Heinlein garbage. It is always more fun to attack the best.

I should say that I read very few comic books these days: the Kirby titles, the Barks reprints, the occasional U.S.S. Stevens story, and a few others. I get a real kick out of the Kirby comics.

CAPTAIN AMERICA and BLACK PANTHER are fairly standard superhero stuff. They are colorful and fast-moving—what I call cheerful nonsense, on a par with the James Bond movies. 2001 is strange and unpredictable. It is too soon to judge whether Kirby will succeed with it, but I challenge you to guess what will be happening by issue #12.

THE ETERNALS is a novel in comic-book format. Each book is a chapter. There are very few concessions to the reader who picks it up in the middle or who isn't willing to wait a month for the next development. Perhaps this format turns you off. Me, I love a serial.

No other writer for the comics has Kirby's emotional range. In a single issue (ETERNALS #12) the characters are by turns curious, indignant, flirtatious, grateful, stubborn, bitter, selfish, ironic, lonely, awed, playful, frightened, ecstatic. The emotions are played broadly—Henry James it ain't—but at least they are there. The characters are not pawns to a plot twist dreamed up by the cover artist.

The art and the story work together. Neither can stand alone. The captions are sometimes silly (they are Kirby's weakest point), but the dialogue flows. It draws you into the book. In ETERNALS #12, page 10 works particularly well, in context. The disagreement between the characters is real, not forced. Neither is obviously right or obviously wrong, nor is the conflict based upon a misunderstanding. And it is not obvious what the outcome will be.

The artwork is spectacular. It moves. It tells a story. The full-page panels are sometimes panoramic, but as often they emphasize character and intensify emotion, like a close-up in a movie. The plot is full of surprises: the shallowness of Zuras, those remarkable Russian relatives of Ikaris, the romance between Inhuman and deviant. Kirby knows his strong points. He makes the reader care about his characters and he keeps you wondering what will happen to them next.

It occurs to me that you may not have read ETERNALS or only read the first couple of issues or only looked at the pictures.

Or, perhaps, the other newsstand comics have gotten better recently. I admit I haven't been reading them. Which current regular newsstand comic book gives you the kind of entertainment that Kirby gives me?

Bruce Johnson, 1115 North Geneva
Glendale, California 91207 [March 16, 1977]

I love it! I myself have given up 2001 after four issues and ETERNALS after bearing through with it for eleven issues, seeing if it got any better. On the contrary, it got worse. I have been toying with getting rid of CAPTAIN AMERICA. However, I just don't have the heart to do it; after all, Cap's a legend, you know. As for BLACK PANTHER, if he doesn't get any better in the next few issues, out he goes!

I wrote a letter to Jack about his work on CAP and on his work in general, telling him how I felt about his new stuff. I told him I think he has too much work to do and his titles are suffering because of this. He writes, draws, and edits four books and does numerous other covers for Marvel—way too much.

Gary Arlington, San Francisco Comic Book Company
3339 23rd Street, San Francisco, California 94110
[March 19, 1977]

about things may be true, but it's how you say it. You are not God. Keep up the good work.

Phil Sunde, 3415 North 26th
Tacoma, Washington 98407 [March 16, 1977]

J. Alan Bolick, 2285 Brockett Road
Tucker, Georgia 30084 [March 22, 1977]

that when Kirby came back to Marvel, his CAPTAIN AMERICA scripts were very bad, but I had faith in Kirby and I felt the bad scripts were all a part of his settling in again at Marvel. It was in the issue with Ogron (or is it Orgon?) that I felt Kirby getting settled in. The art was the best since he'd returned, and the script, while flawed, was better than the past ones. Later, I knew my waiting was over. The Swine series was good and written so simply it was quite enjoyable. Donna Maria could turn out to be Cap's newest love, and a confrontation with Sharon Carter looks inevitable. Things got even better with the weirdly interesting Arnim Zola and Doughboy. Zola is obviously Kirby's best villain—original that has appeared in CA for some time. And, of course, the return of the Red Skull, Cap's best foe, was most welcome. More importantly, the dialogue and plot are being upgraded and given more solidity. All in all, Kirby has done wonders for CAPTAIN AMERICA.

I enjoyed Englehart as much as anyone else, but to quote one reader whose letter was printed in a recent issue of CA, "I don't like heroes who act like Captain Easy Rider or Captain Relevance, going through psyche rending and/or identity crisis every issue." I must say that I heartily concur. There are far too many anti-hero writers working on hero comics. Gerry Conway, Chris Claremont, and—to a degree—Roy Thomas. But I'll save that for another letter.

To state it simply, I do not think CAPTAIN AMERICA deserves to be classified as Kirby Krap. The book is heating up and getting better all the time. You two just need a bit of patience.

Recently an ad for King Features appeared in TEG. I noted that the familiar I wrote to Mr. Byck for more details of the "demise" of TTL. He replied only that TTL began on August 13, 1928. PERIOD. Over and out. Surely, the end of a strip that lasted almost 50 years with the same syndicate deserves an in-depth report in BB or TEG. If Lyman Young, Senior, is still alive, I do believe it would be worthwhile to interview both father and son. Have they ever been invited to a comics convention? What are their future plans?

The Cleveland Press, Monday, January 3, 1977

This busy world Mickey Mouse runs his life



Al "Mickey Mouse" Frettoloso

Most of Al Frettoloso's mail comes addressed "care of the Mouse House" On Haight St. in San Francisco.

And it's no wonder. Frettoloso bases his life and personal philosophy on Mickey Mouse, the celebrated cartoon character.

"Everything I look at is Mickey Mouse," he said in an interview. "The whole way I think and feel is Mickey Mouse. I let nothing bother me or hassle me—nothing is important enough to make me unhappy."

"It's just me and the Mouse—we're always together."

To prove it, Frettoloso has a Mickey Mouse wristwatch, Mickey Mouse cuff links, Mickey Mouse pillow cases, a Mickey Mouse toilet seat, a Mickey Mouse jacket, Mickey Mouse socks and even Mickey Mouse Christmas tree bulbs.

Frettoloso, 28, a Loomis Courier Service employee, explains that his

obsession with Mickey Mouse started six years ago when someone gave him the wristwatch.

"I looked at that watch, and I looked at what was going on around me, and suddenly I had a new perspective. Suddenly I saw things for what they are."

He even has a Mickey Mouse checkbook.

"What a great feeling to have the Bank of America acknowledge my reality," he said. "What a great feeling to have them send checks to Mickey Mouse Frettoloso and let the sign them that way."

He has been to Disneyland 40 times.

"I don't even do the rides anymore," he said. "I just sit and watch the people. I watch their eyes and listen to their voices and I see it again and again, over and over, always for the first time."

Beautiful Balloons Letters

B.B.
LETTERS

Concerning THE ETERNALS, I like the book very much. The art is excellent, especially the full-page or two-page spreads. The war between the Eternals and the Deviants is most interesting and all in all, it's good fantasy and worth my 30¢ (soon to be an outrageous 35¢) a month. The only mistake Kirby has made with this title is the decision to put it in the "Marvel Universe" -- with all those giant gods walking the Earth, it seems impossible that no superheroes such as Avengers, Champions, Defenders, Inhumans, have battled them yet.

2001 is worthy of the title "Kirby Krap." From issue #1, the book has fallen flat; by issue #6, I was tired of seeing the boring and repetitious "Star Child" transformations. The writing is too flat, not unlike a Coke that's been shaken, then opened, giving the drinker the feeling he is drinking lilac water. Marvel will undoubtedly cancel it.

As for your criticism of Kirby's art, I totally disagree. Granted, at times, his art looks as if it was drawn at breakneck speed but, as I've said before, the one-page and two-page spreads are so intricate and detailed, it makes up for the bad panels. In not liking Kirby's art, I think you are in a minority. In the early 60's it was Stan Lee, Steve Ditko and Jack Kirby who kept the books on the best-selling pace they're still on today.

Sooner or later, all the Kirby defenders invoke his past accomplishments; what we are asking for is reason to admire his present work. It is 1977, not the Forties or the Sixties. As you all must know by now, Kirby has been taken off CAPTAIN AMERICA because the sales have been disastrous. We use the word "disastrous" advisedly--under Steve Englehart and under the writers who followed him on the book, CA was one of Marvel's top sellers. Under Kirby, according to a figure we keep getting from various sources, sales were down to 19% of the print run. We're not sure we believe sales were that bad, but that's the figure we keep getting. Our understanding is that the breakeven point on sales of CA is about 35%. We further understand that every percentage point above or below the breakeven point is worth about \$500 in profits (if above breakeven) or losses (if below breakeven). If these figures are accurate (and we are unable to vouch for them) Marvel was losing \$8000 an issue on CAPTAIN AMERICA. I think we can expect Roy Thomas to take Cap in a very different direction very quickly; Gil Kane may do the art. As for his other books, we gather that THE ETERNALS is selling well; they did substitute an ETERNALS ANNUAL for another scheduled annual. We honestly do not expect his BLACK PANTHER to last long (no one seems to have had anything good to say about that title, with the exception of Rick Norwood's mildly favorable aside) and 2001 seems a good bet for an early demise. Incidentally, Kirby will be doing another new book -- about cavemen, which should ease his problems with dialogue -- to replace CAPTAIN AMERICA. As for those one-page and two-page drawings being "intricate and detailed," surely you jest, since they are neither. What they are is single panels stretched to cover one or more pages giving Kirby a full-page rate for a single drawing. We attempted to edit out some remarks we felt our correspondents might be embarrassed by in print, such as "If you want to quit buying CA and ETERNALS and continue buying real junk and crap like Red Sonja, Superman, Omega, Kamandi and Ms. Marvel, go right ahead." When did we ever indicate any liking for Superman, Omega and Kamandi? As for Red Sonja and Ms. Marvel, we find them pleasant diversions, readable, comprehensible and well-drawn, qualities we cannot find in PRESENT-DAY Kirby.

Moving along to other subjects, now...

Dave Willcox, 625 S. Highland Ave.,
Arlington Heights, IL 60005 [Rec'd 11 Apr 77]

let the 'original' fool you; excellent though SWAMP THING was, it was initially a copy of Marvel's MAN-THING... When I first started reading SWAMP THING, I didn't know if it or MAN-THING was a copy. I preferred to think MAN-THING was, as I liked SWAMP THING and, indeed, the DC line more than Marvel's. However, I now know that SWAMP THING was not a copy, as evidenced in SWAMP THING #10's lettercol in answer to a reader's question "Our Swamp Thing began his career in a short story in HOUSE OF SECRETS #92, which was written shortly before Marvel's first Man-Thing story in SAVAGE TALES #1." The comment goes on to explain the production at DC requires more time than Marvel's and the set-up of DC's mystery books as the reason SWAMP THING appeared second.

The reason I'm writing to explain this is that I am personally getting a little tired of reading BB and finding short "cuts" to the work of others. This installment implied that SWAMP THING was a plagiarism. I know BB is an opinion column but when you present opinions which have nothing to do with the point you're trying to make (such as "Kirby Krap"), don't make them. In the future, I'd prefer to read opinions concerning a specific topic, not those thrown in as an afterthought.

If you thought our comment on "Kirby Krap" had nothing to do with the point we were trying to make, then you didn't understand the point we were trying to make. And we had a specific point to make in re THE ORIGINAL SWAMP THING SAGA, which is that "original" should not be taken to imply that other swamp things (note lower case there) were copies of Swamp Thing. DC's answer to a letterwriter is a good illustration of why oaths taken in court require the truth and the whole truth; it is true as far as it goes but it does not go far enough. Apparently you have not read the "Swamp Thing" short story in HOUSE OF SECRETS. SAVAGE TALES #1 was dated May, 1971, meaning it went on sale about February or March. HOUSE OF SECRETS #92 was dated June-July, 1971, meaning it went on sale about two months later. So far, well and good and maybe DC's story was written first. In any case, the concept of man-turned-swamp-monster was not original with either company. The Heap had been lumbering through the pages of AIR FIGHTERS COMICS and, later, AIRBOY COMICS since Volume 1, #3, dated December, 1942. Further, the concept dates back at least as far as the August, 1940, issue of UNKNOWN, a pulp magazine, in which Theodore Sturgeon's "It" first appeared. [That story was adapted into comics form in the first issue of Marvel's SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS and the adaptation was reprinted in MASTERS OF FANTASY.] However, the "Swamp Thing" short story was about a man named Alex Ridge, murdered by his best friend and buried in the swamp, who returns as a monster to kill his false friend and save his wife.

"Man-Thing" in SAVAGE TALES #1 dealt with a man named Ted Sallis, a chemist working on a secret project, attacked by a band of thieves, who injects himself with his serum and plunges into the swamp, where the swamp and serum interact to convert him into a swamp-monster. Then, in SWAMP THING #1 (dated October-November, 1972) and published well after SAVAGE TALES #1) the series began with the story of how a man named Alec Holland, a chemist working on a secret project, is attacked by a band of thieves, is spattered with his serum in an explosion and plunges into the swamp, where the swamp and the serum interact to convert him into a swamp-monster. What DC failed to mention in that lettercol was that the short story bore only faint resemblance to the series and that the series bore strong similarities to Marvel's series -- and that DC's series was written a year after Marvel's series began. What we would prefer to believe is not always the case--and our opinions are not always just "afterthought."

Jim McKelvey, PO Box 456
Benicia CA 94510 [24 Mar]

Re your 'Lysenko Award' to Cary Bates in TBG 57: What do you mean by saying there are more cosmic rays in the ozone layer than elsewhere? Do you think that cosmic rays pile up in the inosphere like coffee grounds in a coffee filter?



Howard Leroy Davis, 38 Simpson Avenue, Pitman, N.J. 08071 [Received 20 Apr 77]

"Cosmic rays" (actually extremely high-frequency photons, like visible light, only waypast ultraviolet) are "filtered" by absorption, i.e., they pump energy into the upper atmosphere and put the "ion" in ionosphere by separating electrons from atoms. Plenty of cosmic rays make it through to the surface but the more atmosphere they must travel through the greater the chance of absorption. So, a cosmic-ray powered spaceship would be operating under a disadvantage inside the atmosphere. Better yet, chase it around to the night side of earth...but enough. I think you have unfairly picked on Cary Bates.

I take it you didn't read the story. The cosmic-ray-powered ship operated just fine everywhere except in the ozone layer because that was the point where cosmic rays were filtered out. Problem was that I (Don) made the mistake of using an inexact analogy, for which I apologize. A couple others wrote about this, including one who signed his name complete with Ph.D. (I must have three dozen correspondents and friends with Ph.D.'s at a bare minimum, but this is the first time anyone has ever appended it to his signature in a letter) who accused me of calling Cary Bates a moron, which I most certainly did not do. Dennis Mallonee of 4085 Nobel Dr. #3, San Diego CA 92122 also objected ("So while whoever wrote that line wasn't quite correct--should have been chased below the ozone layer--he was more correct than thou." Again, the ship in the story operated just fine below the ozone layer, which was the objection I failed to make clear, primarily because of that ill-chosen analogy.) and Dennis went on to make the valid recommendation that "The Trofim Denisovich Lysenko Award [for failure to grasp scientific principles] perhaps would better have gone for the cumulative efforts of all the people who've ever plotted a story based on Iron Man or Dr. Doom being zapped by electricity. A metal body stocking is an incredibly effective shield against such things." Agreed. Does anyone else out there recall the time a foe knocked out the entire Justice Society of America simply by starting his car--the carbon monoxide from the exhaust knocked them out despite the fact that it was from only one car in a completely open area. Heaven knows how any of these guys manages to walk down the streets of a big city.

Tom Hegeman, R.D.,
Chatham, N.Y. 12037
Jan 77

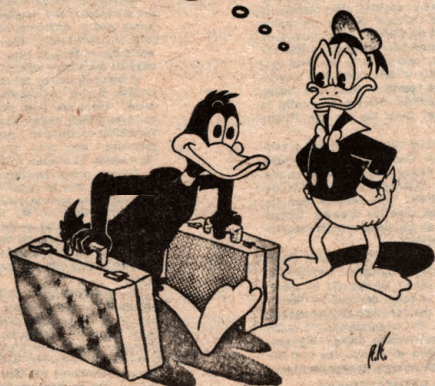
I echo those sentiments expressed in TBG concerning the quality of New Jersey fandom. If the cons so far are any indication they may well, as John Iavarone points out, overshadow New York. My impression of the last few years' worth of NY cons has been a lot of people milling about in crumbling hotels with no real purpose. [Sounds like the impression many have of New York itself -- DT] At times I even wondered whether the co-presence of the collectors and the comics wasn't something of a coincidence. NY, as far as I'm concerned, is even now vastly overshadowed by such cities as Boston, South Jersey and Pittsburgh.

And, as long as the topic of active fan organizations comes up, you really ought to mention the Pittsburgh Comix Club. Not only do they put on a nice friendly con each year, but they publish a nice little magazine. And you don't even have to be a resident of Pittsburgh (or even Pa.) to join (in fact, last I knew there were a couple of members in Mentor, Ohio). This, in a somewhat roundabout way, gets us back to cons. For two months I have been trying to arrange my finances so I could get to Pittcon this April. For one thing it's a good con and I am a member of the group putting it on. But more than that it is the people. Same with Boston. Same with Sonja Con. In all cases, I knew somebody there. I used to be able to go to cons and just walk around and gawk and go to panels and be awed by it all. Not anymore. Now the human element is most important. It's not necessary to have friends where a con is being held. I went to Ithacon I last year and I plan to go this year, even though I have no friends in the area (although I met a number of the people involved in the con last year and they were great). Why? Because the con is friendly and they treat you as people. Little things count. Ithacon is the only con I've ever gone to where the con sold food cheap for the fans. This is very nice after some hotel snack bars I can think of.

So, long live Fans of Central Jersey, long live Pittsburgh Comix Club, long live the Comic Book Club of Ithaca. Strong, active clubs give good cons (in addition to their other advantages) and keep other con organizations on their toes.

All of the cons you mention -- plus the superlative San Diego Convention -- sound just great to us. The only reason we don't attend all the conventions you mention is that we don't got the money. We couldn't even go to the Pittsburgh con (this is being written during the con weekend when the weather is cold and wet and miserable; you can be assured we would much rather be among our friends in Pittsburgh), because we can't afford the trip, the hotel accommodations or the food necessary to get the four of us to the cons and keep us alive and healthy while we are there. A lone fan can starve for a weekend and put up with other privations for the sake of his arcane activities; one cannot put a 9-year-old and/or a 4-year-old through discomfort and hunger quite so easily. And, of course, we can't afford to buy anything at the con itself, but that is secondary -- if all the con offers is a chance to buy old comics, there really isn't that much reason to attend; one can buy from TBG ads and have money that would otherwise be spent on travel, rent and food to spend on old comics. We would love to attend one of Phil Seuling's cons in New York -- Maggie and Don have not been to New York since before Valerie and Stephen were born and Val and Steve, of course, haven't been there at all. The Boston conventions sound as if they are the equal of the San Diego cons and the San Diego con last year is, quite simply, the best convention we have ever attended in 22 years of convention-going--and we have attended some very good cons.

Well, there goes
the neighborhood!!



Hello ladies and gentlemen. My name is Red Sonja and I star in my own comic book, skillfully produced by Thorne and Thomas. I would be honored if you read it. If you don't I'll slash your face off.



Don & Maggie's BEAUTIFUL BALLOONS



REVIEW

McConnell 77

presented in such fashion that you could, if you are so inclined, remove the reproductions and frame them. Text is held to a minimum, consisting of a long and thoroughly researched introduction. There are 40 color plates of comic book covers and several black&white pictures with the introduction. Every effort is made to identify the artists. (There are no Timely Comics covers because rights could not be obtained; this strikes us as odd since we never got anything less than full cooperation from Marvel and since Alan Light has been able to get permission to reprint several Timely comics in his Flashback series, but...) Now, as to that "golden age" business: someone whose name eludes me at the moment said once that the golden age of science fiction is 12. That's very profound and very true -- the best science fiction stories were the ones you read when you first started reading SF, when the glory of them was new and when you were inexperienced, making everything seem new and wondrous. By the same token, the golden age of comics is about 9. It is quite possible to guess Richard's approximate age from the covers he chooses as the best. Were I to do such a book, the covers would date primarily from a decade later. A younger fan would cover 1956-1965, another younger would pick 1966-1975. And new fans are right now being awestruck by the 1976-1985 decade. If you are Richard's age, this book will be a wallow in nostalgia. As an art book, well, some of the pictures are striking, a few are very good, some are a bit embarrassing. There is really no justification for including the cover of Green Giant #1 (which is poor art and there is no nostalgia inherent in a comic book which never even got to the newsstands), but I have to confess I'd have run it, for curiosity value if nothing else. The cover selected as the book cover is Action 52, a very fine "Here come the heroes" cover; a similar one, from America's Greatest Comics #1, would have been almost as good a choice. There is no cover I actively dislike but I probably would have leaned heavier on Fawcett than Richard did. From the purchaser's point of view, this book has one really great advantage--you can very easily look through it for yourself and decide if the book is worth the purchase price to you. It's cheaper than laying out \$7500 for the original comics. I like the book very much; artists include Will Eisner, Lou Fine, Jack Cole, Mac Raboy, C. C. Beck and Basil Wolverton, with knowledgeable comments about each.

Two passing comments on Byron Preiss' two series--the larger size of Fiction Illustrated permits much better reproduction and it is worth the extra price to buy the larger size; WEIRD HEROES 6 is worth buying for the memoirs by Edmond Hamilton, the stories by Ron Goulart, Ben Bova, Arthur Byron Cover and Philip José Farmer and the art by Alex Nino, Craig Russell, Tom Sutton, Ralph Reese and Carl Potts & Terry Austin is a bonus.

For what it's worth, a rapid rundown of Alan Light's FLASHBACK series #21-38 (available at \$3 each, four for \$10 from Alan; watch for his ads): All these reprints are of rare old comics; our reviews will be confined to whether there is any reason other than rarity to buy them.

- #21 THE HUMAN TORCH #1 contains the origin of Toro; not much of an origin.
- #22 ALL STAR COMICS #1--rarity is the only reason, but it's reason enough.
- #23 ALL WINNERS COMICS #1--same comment as for ALL STAR #1.
- #24 SPY SMASHER #1--pretty good stories, nothing outstanding.
- #25 AMERICA'S GREATEST #1--excellent Mac Raboy cover (in O'Brien's book), stories about Capt. Marvel, Bulletman & others; a real bargain.
- #26 MARVEL COMICS #4--rarity is reason enough; stories & art stink.
- #27 SILVER STREAK 6--the Green Claw, origin of Daredevil; another bargain.
- #28 WORLD'S FINEST #7--96 pages of Superman, Batman & others; good buy.
- #29 CAPTAIN AMERICA #2--rarity.
- #30 ALL-AMERICAN #24--worth money for Scribby & Red Tornado alone.
- #31 HIT COMICS #1--lovely cover, nice art, so-so stories.
- #32 AMERICA'S GREATEST #7--Captain Marvel, Bulletman & others; very good.
- #33 PLASTIC MAN #2--four long Jack Cole stories; terrific buy; funny.
- #34 IBIS #1--it could be argued that this is one of the 20 or so best issues of any comic published up to 1945; very, very fine stories.
- #35 CAPTAIN MARVEL #7--any Captain Marvel comic is worth having.
- #36 FLASH COMICS #15--good stuff, including Ed Wheelan's "Minute Movies."
- #37 CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT #1--good of its type; Captain Marvel completists need it for the cover.
- #38 WORLD'S FINEST COMICS #8--another 96-page bargain.

If you only want to invest \$10 for four copies, get #33, 34, 35 and 25.

In case you missed it, Super Friends #5 is loaded with inside jokes about comic book characters, past and present. For instance, during a telethon being run by Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman and Aquaman, Funnyman shows up to perform

Cleveland Press, 4 Mar 77

Pohl vaults to top, SFwise

By Don Thompson

Frederick Pohl has been very busy lately. He is science-fiction editor at Bantam Books and has made their SF line one noteworthy for more than Star Trek and Ray Bradbury, their mainstays for years.

He has edited several anthologies, including one with his wife Carol, SCIENCE FICTION DISCOVERIES. All the stories in this are new, never-before-published stories and the collection is very good.

Pohl has also published a fine collection of 10 of his own stories (and two essays), IN THE PROBLEM PIT. More story collections are in the works, including one composed of his collaborations with the late C. M. Kornbluth.

Pohl has been active in the field of autobiography, too, interspersing the good-but-not-outstanding stories in THE EARLY POHL with fascinating anecdotes of his life as an editor of the pulp magazine of beloved memory.

And he has written an excellent novel, the best yet of his many books.

MAN PLUS is a novel about a bionic man. Not TV's comic-book superhero but a man rebuilt to live on Mars, to make it possible for America to set up a permanent colony there.

MAN PLUS by Frederick Pohl. St. Martin's, 215 pages, \$7.95. Science fiction novel.

SCIENCE FICTION DISCOVERIES edited by Carol and Frederick Pohl. Bantam, 272 pages, \$1.50. SF anthology.

IN THE PROBLEM PIT by Frederick Pohl. Bantam, 193 pages, \$1.50. SF stories.

THE EARLY POHL by Frederick Pohl. Doubleday, 133 pages, \$5.95. SF stories and autobiography. The reviewer is a Press staffer and occasional writer of SF.

Roger Torraway hasn't made too much of a success of his life as an ordinary man and the physical pain and psychological horrors of becoming a monster designed to live on another world are overwhelming.

Pohl gets inside his characters very well in a book that is at the same time a novel about real people and their social and psychological problems, and a solid piece of scientific speculation.

There also is a surprise twist at the end, but it is not a cheat -- the background has been fully and fairly developed and the ending is logical.

All in all, this is not just Pohl's best (to date -- he has several more books forthcoming) but one of the half-dozen or so best SF books of the past several years.

PREFACE The reviews which follow are by Don, just so you know who is meant by "I." I had planned to devote quite a bit of space this time to reviewing the "Weird Heroes" and "Fiction Illustrated" series produced by Byron Preiss for Pyramid Books (which is changing its name to Jove Books). Unfortunately, the time didn't make itself available--among other things, I have had some rush reading to do for book reviews for the Cleveland Press; in the last week, I have read John D. MacDonald's 447-page novel Condominium and the first six volumes of John Jakes' "American Bicentennial Series" (The Bastard, The Rebels, The Seekers, The Furies, The Titans, The Warriors), which add up to a staggering 3,648 pages. Reviews of these books will be reprinted here after they appear in the Press. And maybe next month I will be able to give Byron's series the attention they deserve -- in brief, we recommend them, but such a passing remark does not do them or you any true service.

Richard O'Brien's book of comic-book covers is now available from Ballantine at \$6.95. The Golden Age of Comic Books 1937-1945 is an art book; there are no stories in it, just covers.



DAWK! I just love my new Mickey Mouse CLUB!



A King's 'Shining' hour

books

THE SHINING by Stephen King. 447 pages, Doubleday, \$8.95. Fiction. The reviewer is a freelance writer.

By Maggie Thompson

As May and June approach and thaws seem more of a problem than blizzards, you may want to relive the chill days of winter. There may even come a hot, damp summer's day so stifling that even evening's cool does little to abate it. That might be the time to read THE SHINING. Because it's a chilling book about a chilling time and the most suspenseful and violent portion of the book takes place in the midst of an incredible snowstorm in the Colorado mountains. For that matter, the whole book is intended to be chilling in mood and lives up to its intentions quite nicely.

It is the latest novel from the author of "Salem's Lot" and "Carrie." The "shining" referred to is extrasensory perception -- precognition, telepathy, ability to perceive aspects outside the normal.

The three main characters are writer Jack Torrance, his wife Wendy and their five-year-old son Danny, all of whom go to live in a resort hotel which remains unoccupied during winter in the Colorado mountains.

Jack and Wendy are to act as caretakers of what turns out to be a menacing location, and the menace is apparent early in the novel. The menace's actions toward the three provides the meat of the book.

THE SHINING is well written and well paced; there is one point at which the action slows slightly (about two-thirds of the way through) but it picks up speed rapidly from there.

By the last quarter of the book, the reader is hard-put to stop reading. King has mastered his

techniques nicely. Such mastery is necessary in a book in which impressions, thoughts and telepathy have to be conveyed in addition to more normal action and communication. Many writers who have tried this have failed. King doesn't.

King says of Jack, "Ordinarily he liked all of his characters, the good and the bad. He was glad he did. It allowed him to try to see all of their sides and understand their motivation more clearly. . . . Let the reader lay blame. In those days he hadn't wanted to judge. The cloak of the moralist sat badly on his shoulders."

For a writer to like all his characters -- and to communicate that liking to a reader -- is a marvelous ability. King has it.

If you do not enjoy suspense fantasies, for heaven's sake, don't bother with this. If you dislike novels of violence and danger, stay away. After all, as King describes:

"The hedges had really walked. There was a dead woman in 217, a woman that was perhaps only a spirit and harmless under most circumstances, but a woman who was now an active danger. . . . Had it been Watson who had told him a man had dropped dead of a stroke one day on the route court? . . . There had been an assassination on the third floor. How many old quarrels, suicides, strokes? How many murders? Was Grady lurking somewhere in the west wing with his ax, just waiting for Danny to start him up so he could come back out of the woodwork?"

Chilling reading for any season and a lot of fun, if you like that sort of thing.

Power Man after Iron Fist is canceled) in the style of Don Martin. It is as bright and cheery a cover as we've seen in some time, a surefire mood brightener.

CARTOONIST Profiles #33 (subs are \$10 for 4 issues from PO Box 325, Fairfield, Connecticut 06430) continues to be your best source of news on comic strips. This issue has an excellent piece and samples from Sam & Silo by Mort Walker and Jerry Dumas (a recycling of Sam's Strip, minus the inside jokes that made the strip a cult favorite but a commercial failure -- most readers couldn't understand what Dagwood was doing in Sam's Strip when he belonged in Blondie. Also in this issue, pieces on Vera Valiant, Rube Goldberg, Disney and others, including Jerry De Fuccio's sponsoring of C. C. Beck's re-awakening of Jack Cole's Daredevil vs. Claw epic from Silver Streak #7. We recommend it.

We got a copy of The Hard-Boiled Detective: Stories from Black Mask Magazine 1920-1951 (\$2.45 from Vintage in paperback) edited by Herbert Ruhm. We assume Mr. Ruhm is out there in TBG-land and wish to thank him for the book. It is an excellent collection with stories by Raymond Chandler, Lester Dent, Dashiell Hammett and many others--all good. One of the Hammetts has, as far as we know, never been reprinted; it originally appeared under the name of Peter Collinson and has never been in any previous Hammett collection. If you like your ops hardboiled, this is the place to get them.

If you enjoy science fiction and want to know more about the people who create it, try a subscription to Andy Porter's superlative semi-professional magazine, Algol (3 issues, for \$4.50, single issue \$1.95 from Algol Magazine, PO Box 4175, New York NY 10017). Issue #28 just arrived with articles by Alfred Bester, R. A. Lafferty and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, an article about A. E. van Vogt and regularly appearing columns by Richard Lupoff, Susan Wood, Vincent DiFate and Frederick Pohl. Somehow I neglected to mention articles by Jack Williamson and Carl Sagan; if such can be overlooked, only imagine the quality of Algol. It is certainly the best magazine about science fiction being published. (We do not consider "fanzine" to be a pejorative term and we have called Algol a fanzine before; however, Andy is paying his contributors and selling Algol in bookstores, so "semi-professional magazine" seems more accurate. If he ever starts showing a profit, we'll drop the "semi" from the description.)

Thanks to the U.S. Postal Service, we are only now in receipt of Volume Four of Who's Who of American Comic Books (\$6.75 from Jerry Bails, 487 Lakewood, Detroit, Michigan 48215). This identifies and gives a capsule biography of comic book writers, artists and editors whose last names begin with letters T through Z, plus an addenda on data acquired since Volumes 1-3 were published. The first three volumes are also available, 1 at \$5.75, 2 (in short supply) at \$7.75, 3 at \$6.75. Beautifully reproduced black-and-white artwork by Alex Toth, Neal Adams, Steve Ditko, Bernie Krugstein and others add to the value and usefulness of this volume. Act now and get the entire set. The amount of work that went into this project is mind-boggling. And, if you want to know what issues of AIR FIGHTERS or AIRBOY contained the Heap or in which issues of PRIZE COMICS Frankenstein appeared, consult Howard Keltner's Index to Golden Age Comic Books (\$4.75, also from Bails). An unbelievable amount of data in remarkably small space.

More than a news magazine is MEDIASCENE, a Jim Steranko production (\$7.50 a year from Supergraphics, Box 445, Wyomissing, Pa. 19610). It contains articles on superheroes, pulps, animation, sword & sorcery and other topics and news on upcoming comics, books and movies. In addition, it features the too-seldom-seen artwork of Steranko.

If you have a lot of money, you should get Graphic Gallery as a catalog of original art for sale. If, like us, you do not have a lot of money, you should still get GG (\$4 from Russ Cochran, PO Box 437, West Plains, Missouri 65775) for its fantastic reproduction of great original art. GG#9, for instance, contains reproductions from the original art of the rejected first page of Flash Gordon (Raymond rewrote and redrew the entire sequence; this has literally never been published before) which you can try to buy for a minimum bid of \$4000. Original art in this issue by George Barr, Hal Foster, Elzie Segar, Walt Kelly, Frank Frazetta and countless others.

UNDERGROUNDS For various reasons, we haven't been able to review underground comix lately. As a result, we haven't seen as many lately. We will try to make up for the former and maybe we can get back on some review lists again; much of what we have here was bought at Cosmic Comics in the Colonial Arcade in downtown Cleveland, OH; about the only place we can regularly find undergrounds. We will lump these by publisher so you can know where to order them if you are not fortunate enough to have outlets near you.

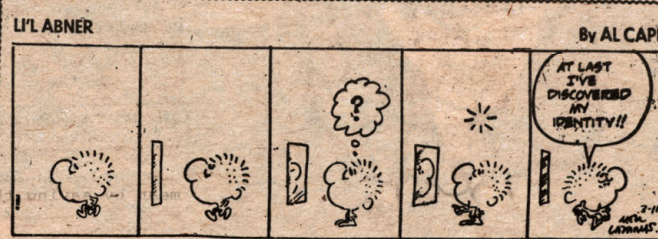
Kitchen Sink/Krupp Comic Works, PO Box 7, Princeton, Wisconsin 54968. KURTZMAN KOMIX (\$1) reprints of "Hey, Look!" "Potshot Pete," "Sheldon" --comic book work done by Kurtzman in pre-Mad days. Rare and funny, with an introduction by R. Crumb tossed in and a new cover as a bonus. Worth it.

SNARF 6 (75¢) Joel Beck, Dennis Kitchen, Gary Hallgren, Justin Green, Jay Kinney, Ted Richards & Willy Murphy, Evert Geradts, George Metzger, Howard Cruse and others. Excellent--anything with Cruse alone is worth 75¢.

COMIX BOOK #4 and 5 (\$1 each)--the first three issues were published by Marvel. These two issues clean out the inventory, complete Justin Green's serial (which I disliked) and give you work by John Pound, Skip Williamson, Trina, Joel Beck, Ted Richards, Willy Murphy, Gary Hallgren, Lee Mars, Howard Cruse, Kim Deitch, Tim Boxell, S. Clay Wilson and others. Worth it.

BIZARRE SEX 5 (\$1)--very funny sex-oriented stuff; cover by Corben, work by Steve Stiles, Joel Beck, Robert Crumb, Howard Cruse and others. Dennis Kitchen has always been a bit defensive about this title; he needn't be defensive any longer.

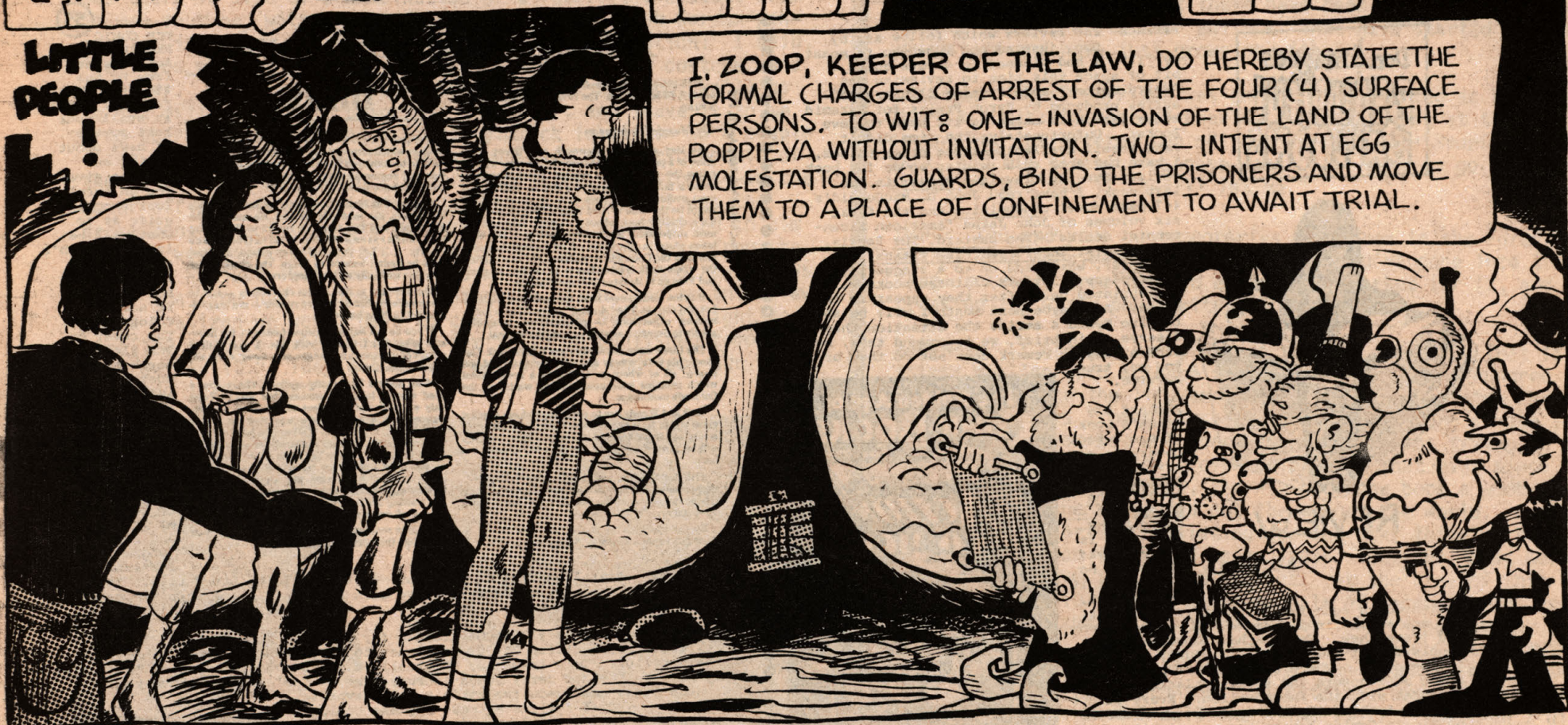
And I have run out of room to discuss Star-Reach and Quack (7 issues of S-R, 2 of Q @ \$1.25 from Star-Reach, PO Box 385, Hayward CA 94543 and recommended). When ordering undergrounds, sign statement that you are 18.



--Did you really, Abner...?

GOODGUY AND THE PEOPLE OF THE EGG . 4 .

LITTLE PEOPLE!



MR. GOODGUY, MY NAME IS DR. SEZ. MY TITLE IS KEEPER OF KNOWLEDGE. I KNOW ABOUT YOU AND YOUR UNUSUAL TALENTS. I APPEAL TO YOUR SENSE OF FAIR PLAY AND GENERAL GENTLEMANLINESS TO PERMIT JUSTICE TO TAKE ITS COURSE.

VERY WELL, DR. SEZ. IT'LL PROBABLY BE THE SIMPLEST WAY TO SATISFY OUR RAMPANT CURIOSITIES.

AH, IT'S THE SOUND OF WISDOM THESE OL' EARS BE A HEARIN' AND IN THE SPEECH OF THE POPPIEYA!!

JUST ONE OF MY MANY TALENTS. EMPATHETIC IN ORIGIN, YOU KNOW.

AH, YES, OF COURSE. THAT WILL GO WELL FOR YOU AT THE TRIAL. SEE IF YOU CAN TEACH YOUR FRIENDS OUR LINGO.

OXM, GENERAL, SIR, WE DON'T HAVE ANY ROPE IN WHICH TO BIND THE PRISONERS BUT WE DO HAVE SOME STRING. IS THAT OKAY?

ARRGH! I AM SURROUNDED BY INCOMPETENTS! USE IT, USE IT!

THIS IS ALL VERY CUTE BUT SO IS A TANZANIAN DEVIL!

WHAT'S GOING ON GOODGUY?

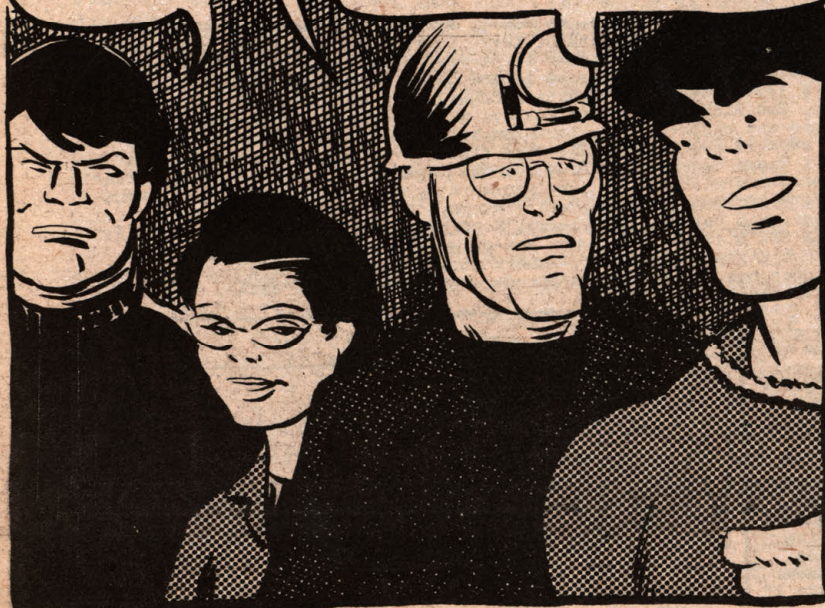
LIKE HE SAID, WE ARE BEING ARRESTED FOR BREAKING LAWS. NOW LISTEN - I'M GOING TO PASS ON TO YOU SOME OF MY EMPATHETIC POWER SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THESE PEOPLE. PROFESSOR, TOUCH SU'S FOREHEAD.

SU, TOUCH SAM'S FOREHEAD. A SAMPLE WILL DO IT!

WHEN YOU CAN TALK 'N' UNDERSTAND SOMEONE'S LANGUAGE, THINGS DON'T SEEM SO STRANGE..

"03f-2af3e5z4ax8t892sg> x m+0 7e6 f12e04h 03:02 6." "THERE IS MORE TO THE MUSHROOM THAN JUST THE PIE AND MORE TO LIFE THAN MEETS THE EYE."

HUH?



HEY, I CAN UNDERSTAND POPPIEYA! AND TO THINK I FLUNKED SPANISH!

COME ON! WILL YA!? GET YOUR HANDS OUT SO I CAN TIE 'EM.

BUT WHY IS EVERYBODY DRESSED LIKE THEY ARE? I MEAN, **THE LONE MARSHAL?** **BUCK GORDON?**

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LEPRECHAUNS? ELVES? TROLLS? AMAZING! THE COLLEGE WILL NEVER BELIEVE IT--UNLESS I BRING BACK INDISPUTABLE **PROOF....**

MAKE WAY FOR THE KEEPER OF THE EGG!

MAKE WAY FOR THE KEEPER OF THE EGG!

WHODDS!

ZIPZ KNOWS A GOOD THING WHEN HE SEES IT! WHOO!

GOTTA GO! MAKE WAY FOR THE--

HOLD ON LAD!

HEY!

DR. SEZ, WHY ARE YOU HOLDING ME UP? THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE-- THE EGG OF THE LEQS WILL SHORTLY COMMENCE CRACKING-- I'VE GOT TO NOTIFY THE LEQS AND THE CRACKING WELCOMING CLUB...

EASY, ME LAD, ALL IS ALL RIGHT!

ZIPZ, YOU ASPIRED TO AND WHERE CHOSEN AS **KEEPER OF THE EGG** BECAUSE YOU ARE THE FASTEST RUNNER IN ALL POPPIEYA-- BUT IT SO HAPPENS WE HAVE SOMEONE WITH US TODAY WHO IS AT LEAST TWICE AS FAST AS YOU. SO HE WILL BE YOUR SUBSTITUTE FOR THIS CRACKING. YOU TAKE EVERYONE HERE TO THE LEQS EGGS.

SURE, BUT WHO...

GOODGUY, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE SUBSTITUTE **KEEPER OF THE EGG**?

I'LL-A-TAKE A **CRACK** AT IT!

36 MILLS COMICS

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6

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MAY

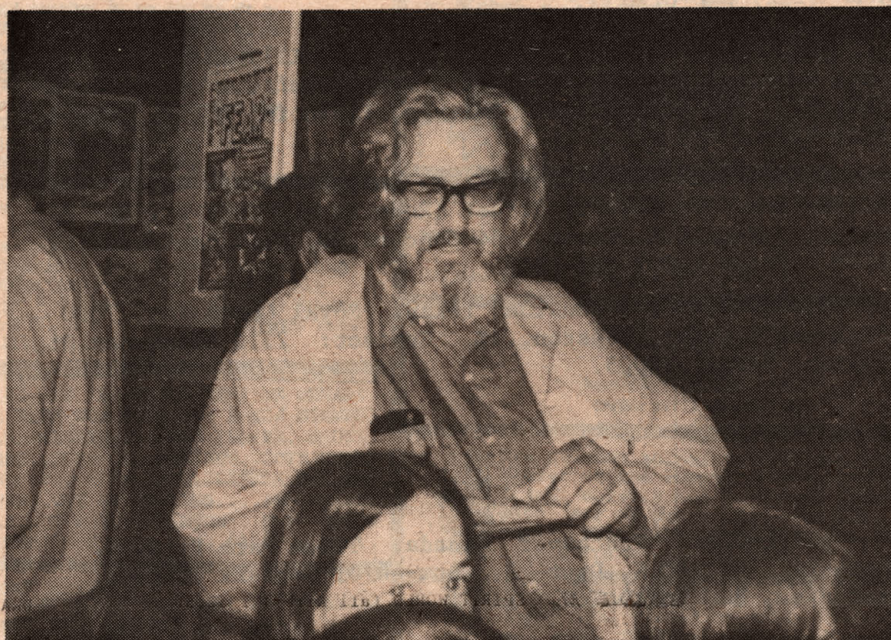
- 6-8 CREATION CON PART II, New York City. New York's only major summer convention this year. Taft Hotel, 7th Avenue and 50th Street. Contact: Gary Berman, Box J393, 3901 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19174
- 7-8 ITHACON II, Ithaca, New York. Greater Ithaca Activities Center, 218 N. Albany Street, Ithaca, New York. Contact: Bill Turner, 20 N. Triphammer Rd, Apt 3D, Ithaca, NY 14850.
- 8 THE SPECTOR COMIC BOOK CLUB, St. Louis, Missouri. Century Bowl, 7508 Michigan. Contact: Mr. Tony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St. Louis, Missouri 63118
- 14 PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 6:30 P.M. at Comics and Sci-Fi Shop, 11 Federal Street. Contact: Ben Pondexter, 827 Anaheim Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Phone (412) 681-1268
- 14 HOLLYWOOD COMIC AND CARTOONING FESTIVAL, Los Angeles, Cal. 1-5 p.m. at Memorial Branch Library, 4625 W. Olympic Blvd. Contact: West Hollywood Library, 1403 N. Gardner St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90046.
- 14-15 ATLANTA MINI-CON, Atlanta, Georgia. Squire Inn, Piedmont & I-85. Contact: Steve Leaf, 1776 Helen Drive, Atlanta, GA 30306.
- 14-15 THE COLUMBUS COMIC CON, Columbus, Ohio. Southern Hotel, corner of South High and E. Main Street, downtown Columbus. Contact: Roy Willis % The Book Store, 19 E. Town St. Columbus, Ohio 43215. Phone (614) 224-4877
- 15 COMIC BOOK CLUB OF CHICAGO, Chicago, Illinois. YMCA HOTEL on South Wabash. Contact: Frank Craft, % Collector's Bookstore, 360 N. Clark, Chicago, IL 60610. Phone (312) 822-0575
- 15 COMIC RAMA, Bergenfield, New Jersey. 10-4 p.m. Middle School, Corner of Washington & Clinton. Contact: Mrs. Moskowitz % Middle School
- 15 THE SUNDAY FUNNIES, Boston, Massachusetts. Boston Park Plaza (formerly Statler Hilton). Contact: Don Phelps, Box 85, Cohasset, Mass. 02025. Phone 383-1237
- 15 FANTASTICON, Farmington, Michigan. Sans Souci Hall, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Contact: Stu Shapiro, 17106 Richard, Southfield, Michigan 48075 Phone 557-8819
- 20 FANS OF CENTRAL JERSEY, Sayreville, New Jersey. North Brunswick Recreation Hall, 7:30 p.m. Contact: FCJ, 48 Embroidery Street, Sayreville, NJ 08872
- 21 DVCC 3, Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Cherry Hill Mall (free). Contact: 38 Simpson Avenue, Pitman, New Jersey 08071. Phone (609) 589-1233.

- 22 THE EAST SHORE COMIC BOOK CONVENTION, East Haven, CT. RAMADA INN of West Haven, 370 Highland Avenue, exit 42 of I-95. Contact: Joe Marcucci, 677 Thompson St., East Haven, CT 06513. Phone 469-6642
- 22 PHIL SEULING'S COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE, New York City. Hotel Taft, 7th Avenue & 50th Street. Contact: Phil Seuling, P. O. Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, New York 11224. Phone (212) 946-8723
- 22 1977 BERKELEY CON, Berkeley, California. Holiday Inn off Highway 80 on San Francisco Bay, 1800 Powell Street, Emeryville, California. Contact: Clay Geerdes, 915 Indian Rock Rd, Berkeley, Calif. 94707
- 23-30 METZ INTERNATIONAL SCI-FI FESTIVAL, Metz, France. Contact: Phillipe Hupp, 7 Rue D'Esperey, 5700 Montigny, Les Metz, France.
- 28-29 SPORTS AND BASEBALL CARD CONVENTION, Anaheim, California. Quality Inn of Anaheim, 616 Convention Way (one block south of Disneyland on Harbor Blvd.). Contact: Steve Brunner, 1308 Cypress Ave, Glendora, Calif. 91740. Phone (714) 898-8741.
- 29 CONNECTICUT COMIC CONVENTION, East Hartford, Connecticut. Holiday Inn, 363 Roberts Street (Roberts St. Exit off Rt. 84) Contact: Harold Kinney, 34 Concord St, East Hartford, CT 06108 Phone (203) 289-1208

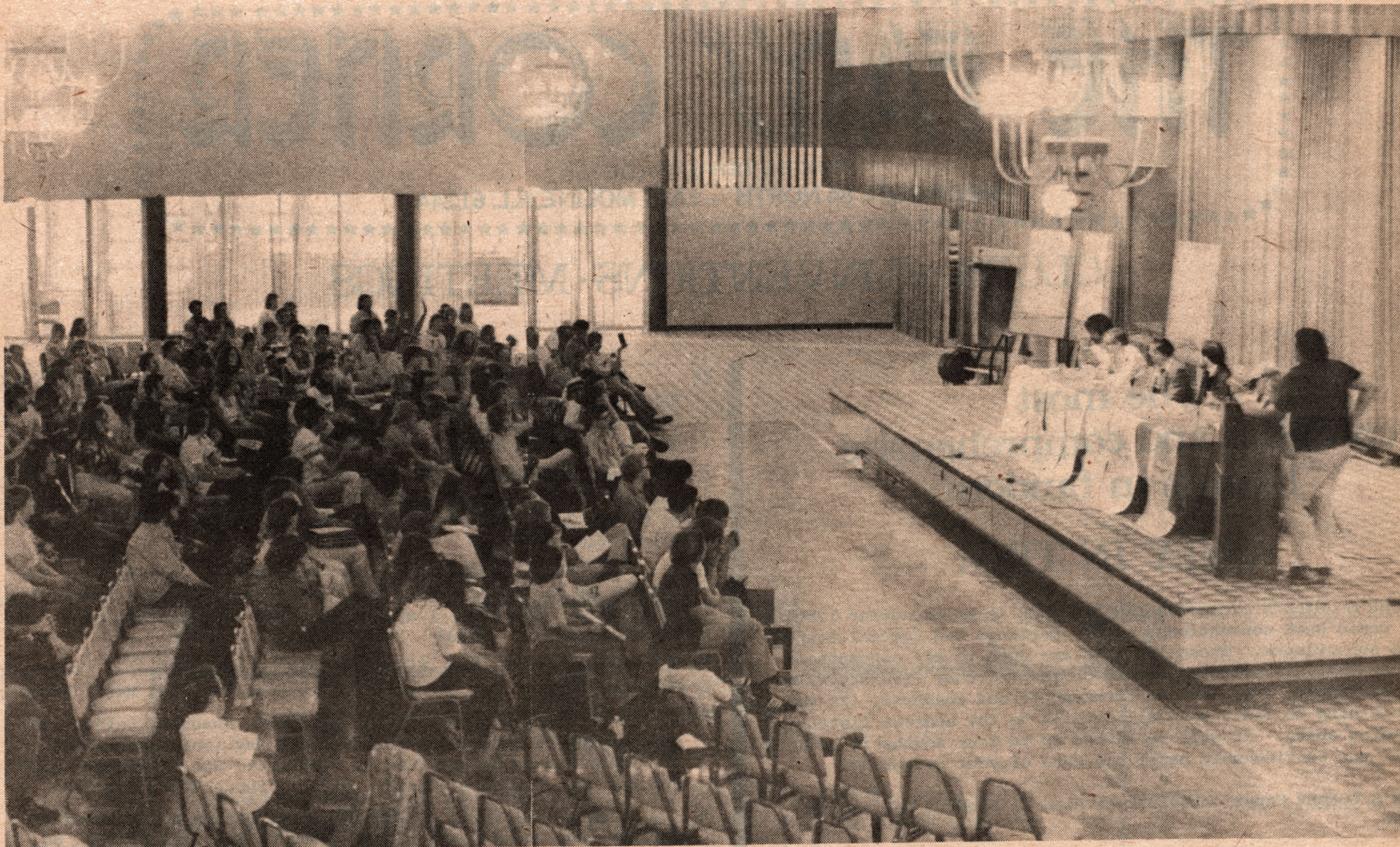
JUNE

- 2-5 1977 SCIENCE FICTION, HORROR & FANTASY WORLD EXPOSITION, Tucson, Arizona. Marriott Hotel (HQ). Contact: P. O. Box 4412, Tucson, Arizona 85717.
- 3-5 KWINTUS KUBLIUS, Nashville, Tennessee. Quality Park Inn. Contact: Ken Moore, 647 Devon Drive, Nashville, TN 37220.
- 4 THE AKRON COMIC BOOK AND CARD SHOW, Akron, Ohio. Summit Shopping Mall, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Contact: Jim Kovacs, % The Bookie Joint, 132 Fourth Street S.W., Canton, Ohio 44701. Phone (216) 454-6466
- 4-5 FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION, Dearborn, Michigan. Dearborn Youth Center, Dome Room, Michigan & Greenfield St. Contact: Schauder Promotions, 2101 Telegraph Rd, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013. Phone (313) 338-7544 or (313) 474-1159.
- 5 NOSTALGIA COMIC BOOK AND GUM CARD CONVENTION, Dolton, Illinois. Ramada Inn Hotel. Contact: LeRoy Szidik, Box 186, Dolton, Illinois 60419.
- 5 IMAGINATION CON, New Haven, Connecticut. New Haven Motor Inn. Contact: Alan Zitomer, 3 Shepard Rd, Woodbridge, CT 06525 Phone (203) 397-1656
- 5 QUEENSCON, Elmhurst, New York. Elk Club Lodge, 82-10 Queens Blvd, across from Macy's. Contact: Chris Parente, 108-30 Ascan Ave, Forest Hills, New York 11375. Phone (212) 263-5296.

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MAD MAGAZINE publisher WILLIAM GAINES is a guest at BAYCON III in San Francisco on August 12-14, 1977.



- 5 HOLLYWOOD COMIC CON, Hollywood, California. Hollywood Women's Club, 1749 N. LaBrea Avenue, Los Angeles. Contact: Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046 Phone (213) 814-7295.
- 5 COMICOVE COMIC BOOKS AND COLLECTIBLES CONVENTION, Paramus, New Jersey. Holiday Inn, next to Paramus Park Mall. Contact: John Garbarino, 118 Cedar Lane, Teaneck, NJ. Phone (201) 692-9275.
- 10 FANS OF CENTRAL JERSEY, North Brunswick, New Jersey. North Brunswick Recreation Hall, 7:30 p.m. Contact: FCJ, 48 Embroidery St, Sayreville, NJ 08872
- 11 PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 6:30 p.m. at the Comics and Sci-Fi Shop, 11 Federal Street. Contact: Ben Pondexter, 827 Anaheim St, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Phone (412) 681-1268
- 12 PAPER AMERICANA AND NOSTALGIA SHOW, Portland, Oregon. Masonic Temple, 1119 S. W. Park. Contact: Old Weird Herald's 634 North East Broadway, Portland, Oregon. Phone 254-4942.
- 12 THE SPECTOR COMIC BOOK CLUB, St. Louis, Missouri. Century Bowl, 7508 Michigan. Contact: Tony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St. Louis, Missouri 63118
- 12 PHIL SEULING'S COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE, New York City. Hotel Taft, 7th Avenue and 50th Street. Contact: Phil Seuling, Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, New York 11224 Phone (212) 946-8723.
- 17-19 X-CON, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Red Carpet Inn. Contact: P. O. Box 97, Greendale, Wisconsin 53129.
- 18 WORLD COLOR PRESS OPEN HOUSE. World Color Press, printer of virtually all comics and most magazines in the nation, is conducting tours and dressing up the whole town of Sparta, Ill. like a "county fair". 50,000 people expected. Comic Con set up in the high school gymnasium. Contact: Phil Seuling, P. O. Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, New York 11224. Phone (212) 946-8723
- 19 COMIC BOOK CLUB OF CHICAGO, Chicago, Illinois. YMCA Hotel on South Wabash. Contact: Frank Craft, % Collector's Bookstore, 360 North Clark, Chicago, Illinois 60610. Phone (312) 822-0575
- 19 CONNECTICUT COMIC CONVENTION, East Hartford, Connecticut. Holiday Inn, 363 Roberts Street (Roberts St. Exit off Rt. 84) Contact: Harold E. Kinney, 34 Concord St, East Hartford, CT 06108 Phone (203) 289-1208
- 22-26 HOUSTONCON '77, Houston, Texas. Royal Coach Inn, 7000 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX. Contact: 2312 Bissonnet St, Houston, Texas 77005.

JULY

- 1-4 WESTERCON 3, Vancouver, Canada. Totem Park U. B. C. Contact: WESTERCON, Dept. B., Box 48701 Bentall Station, Vancouver, BC, CANADA V7X 1A6

- 1-5 TENTH ANNUAL COMIC ART CONVENTION, Philadelphia, Pa. Hotel Sheraton. Contact: Phil Seuling, Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, New York 11224. Phone (212) 946-8723
- 3 NOSTALGIA COMIC BOOK AND GUM CARD CONVENTION, Dolton, Illinois. Ramada Inn Hotel. Contact: LeRoy Szidik, Box 186, Dolton, Illinois 60419.
- 3 HOLLYWOOD COMIC CON, Hollywood, California. Hollywood Women's Club, 1749 N. LaBrea, Los Angeles. Contact: Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046. Phone (213) 814-7295
- 8-10 PULPCON 6, Akron, Ohio. Ramada Inn Hotel. Contact: P. O. Box 14, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281.





Jim Steranko

- 9 PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 6:30 pm at Comics and Sci-Fi Shop, 11 Federal Street. Contact: Ben Pondexter, 827 Anaheim Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Phone (412) 681-1268
- 10 THE SPECTOR COMIC BOOK CLUB, St. Louis, Missouri. Century Bowl, 7508 Michigan. Contact: Tony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St. Louis, Missouri 63118.
- 15-17 THE ALL-AMERICAN COMIC CON, Portland, Oregon. Masonic Temple, 1119 S. W. Park. Contact: Old Weird Herald's, 6804 N. E. Broadway, Portland, OR 97213. Phone (503)254-4942
- 15-17 ARCHON, St. Louis, Missouri. Stouffer's Riverfront Towers. Contact: John Novak, 1260 Moorlands Drive, Richmond Hts, Missouri 63117.
- 17 COMIC BOOK CLUB OF CHICAGO, Chicago, Illinois. YMCA Hotel on South Wabash. Contact: Frank Craft, % Collector's Bookstore, 360 North Clark, Chicago, Illinois 60610 Phone (312)822-0575
- 20-24 1977 SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION, San Diego, California. El Cortez Hotel, 7th and Ash. Contact: P. O. Box 17066, San Diego, California 92117.
- 24 THE EAST SHORE COMIC BOOK CONVENTION, West Haven, CT. Ramada Inn, 370 Highland Avenue (exit 42 on I-95). Contact: Joe Marcucci, 677 Thompson St, East Haven, CT 06513. Phone: 469-6642
- 24 PHIL SEULING'S COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE, New York City. Taft Hotel, 7th Avenue and 50th Street. Contact: Phil Seuling P. O. Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, New York 11224. Phone (212) 946-8723

AUGUST

- 5-7 1977 CHICAGO COMIC CONVENTION, Chicago, Illinois. Pick-Congress Hotel, 520 South Michigan Avenue. Contact: Joe Sarno, 3816 W. Lawrence, Chicago, Illinois 60625.
- 7 HOLLYWOOD COMIC CON, Hollywood, California. Hollywood Women's Club, 1749 N. LaBrea. Contact: Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, Calif. 90046. Phone (213) 814-7295
- 7 NOSTALGIA COMIC BOOK AND GUM CARD CONVENTION, Dolton, Illinois. Ramada Inn Hotel. Contact: LeRoy Szidik, Box 186, Dolton, Illinois 60419.
- 12-14 BAYCON III, San Francisco, California. Jack Tar Hotel. Contact: Sal Dichiera, Box 3931, San Francisco, CA 94119.
- 13 PITTSBURGH COMIX CLUB, Pittsburgh, PA. 6:30 p.m. at the Comics and Sci-Fi Shop, 11 Federal Street. Contact: Ben Pondexter, 827 Anaheim Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Phone (412) 681-1268.
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- 26-28 PHOENIX FAN CONVENTION, Phoenix, Arizona. Adams Hotel. Contact: P. O. Box 33785, Phoenix, AZ 85067.
- 28 CONNECTICUT COMIC CONVENTION, East Hartford, CT. The Holiday Inn, 363 Roberts Street (Roberts St. Exit off Route 84). Contact: Harold Kinney, 34 Concord Street, East Hartford, CT 06108. Phone (203) 289-1208



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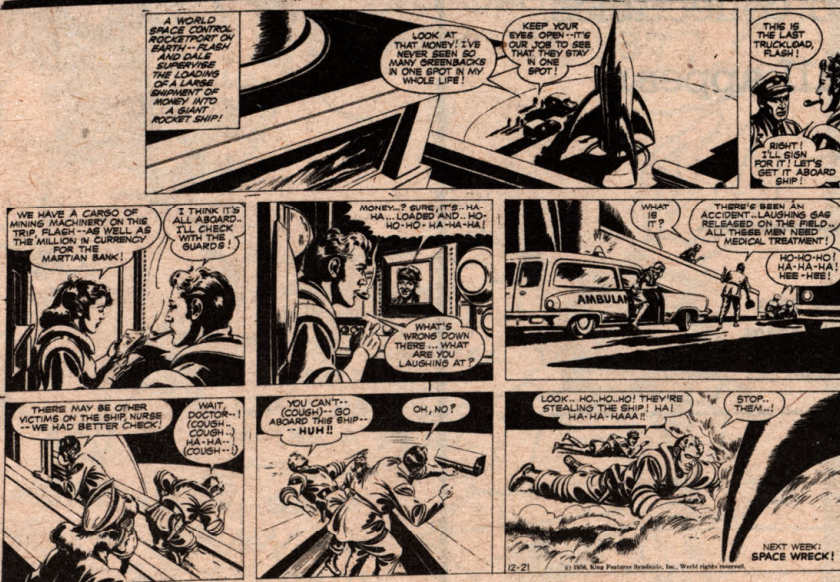
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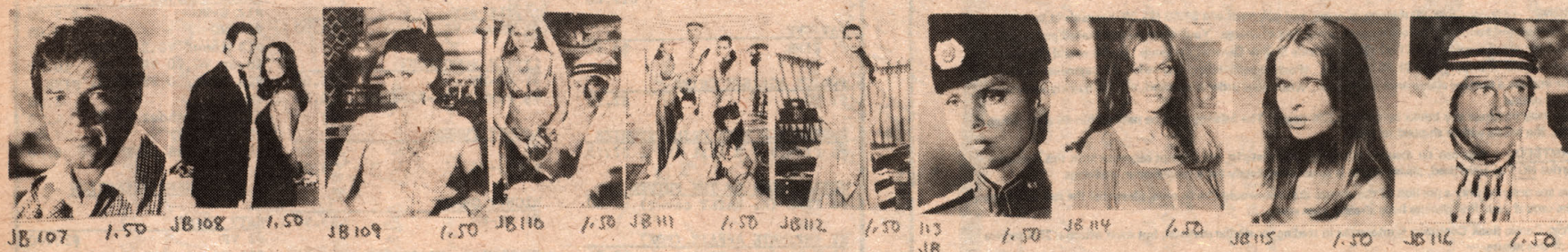
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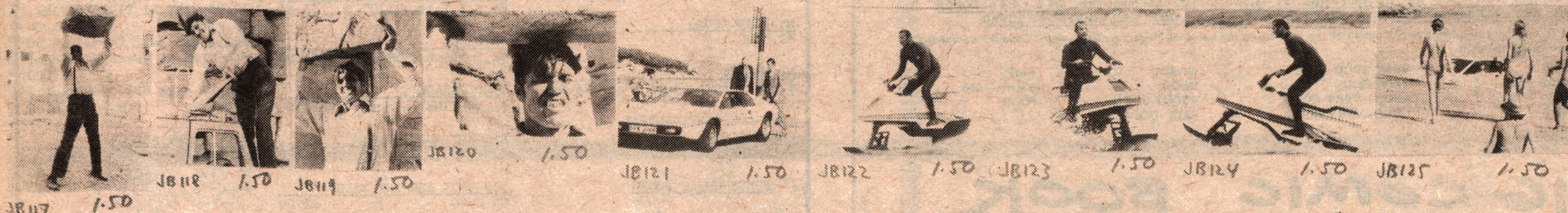


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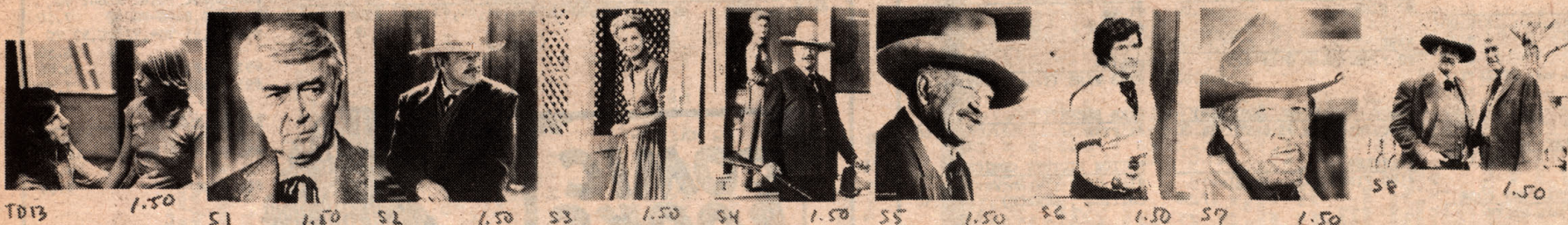
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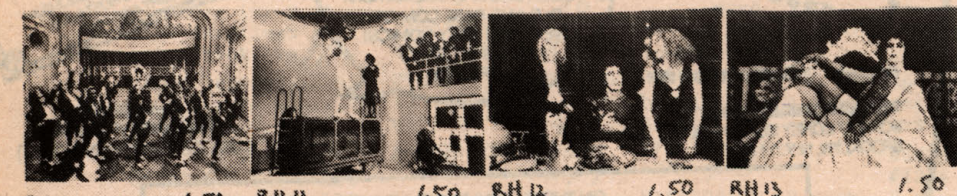
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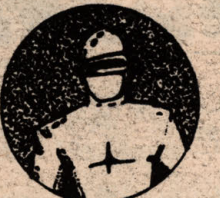
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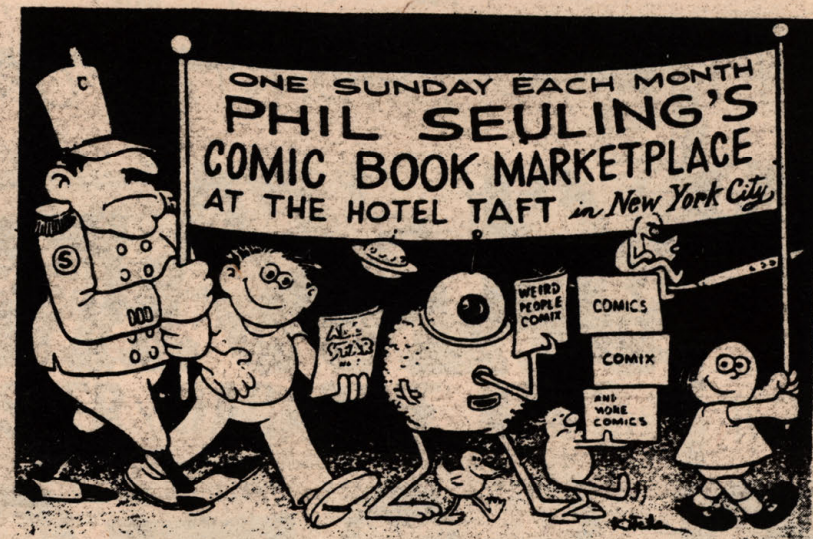
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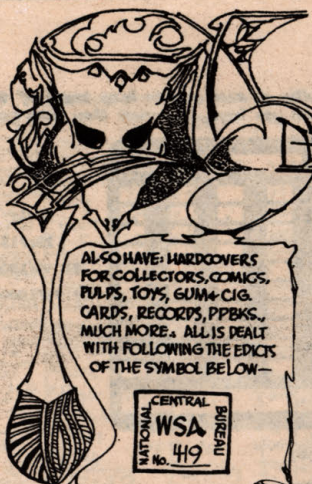
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DERLETH MEMOIRS OF SOLAR PONS. Mycroft & Moran. 1951. Apparently, tearing flypages out of Arkhams was once a fad. Front two are missing here, but again could be replaced given reasonable motor skills. otherwise Fine in VG-Fine DJ. \$20

BODE DEADBONE EROTICA. Bantam. 1971. NM-Mint. \$10
GRAPHIC STORY #10. Copy was bent up a little at the spine when mailed. Noticeable only on back cover and not that bothersome. Else, Very Fine. \$8.50

VIRGIL FINLAY QUARTERLY WORLD REVIEW. Vol. 12. 1941. Strange cheap little hardback. Seven full page illus. Not his best work but I've seen a lot worse. For the completist. \$5

VINTAGE SUNDAY PAGES

SAMBO by OTIS WOOD. 80 full color, full size, uncreased pages from the Portland Oregonian, March 27, 1910 thru October 15, 1911. May skip a few Sundays. Questionable taste by today's racial standards, but engaging when considered in its context. Follow the Perils of Sambo and his girl friend, Phoebe Snow. Well colored, nice roomy panels. On reverse side is "Good Stories for Boys and Girls", a feature loaded with cutouts, interesting stories and great black and white period illustrations by Modest Stein and a host of other top artists.

The pages were cut out of a bound volume by someone who could have done a better job. The cut side is lazily uneven, though at least uniformly so. On this side there is usually at least a quarter of an inch to spare, but I noticed a FEW pages where the cutting did slightly bite into the art. PAPER IS GOOD CONSISTENT WITH AGE. Some chipping but no problem if handled with reasonable care.

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Except where noted, copies are FINE OR BETTER. NOTE: however, that the first NINE issues listed have on front cover a one inch square black ink stamp put there by the kid who owned them. This defect is not really bothersome, in fact kind of charming. In my 1975 price guide these list out at about \$150. I'll throw in a nice copy of HUMBUG #3 and ask.....\$125

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17 vg ... 28.00
24 vg ... 20.00
37 vg ... 12.00
53 vg-fn; 54 vg-fn ... 7.00
59 nm ... 11.00
61 3/4 fc, ow fn-nm ... 5.00

67 nm; 68 fn-nm; 69 nm ... 10.00
70 vg+; 71 edges waterst, ow nm ... 7.00
72 sm pc tape fc & bc, ow fn ... 7.00
73 fn-nm; 74 fn-nm; 75 fn-nm ... 10.00
76 fn-nm ... 10.00
80 vg; 81 fn-nm; 82 nm ... 8.50
82 vg-fn ... 6.00
84 m ... 10.00
89 fn-nm ... 8.50
90 fn ... 6.50
92 vg-fn ... 4.50
102 fn ... 5.50
113 vg; 123 vg-fn ... 4.00

CAPT. MARVEL, JR.: 12 fa ... 5.00
24 vg; 26 vg ... 7.50
27 nm ... 16.00

HAUNT OF FEAR (cont'd): #20 g+ ... 12.00
21 g ... 8.00

IMPACT: #1 nm ... 14.00
5 tape inside bc, ow fn ... 5.00

INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION: 33 vg+ ... 23.00

MAD: #1 vg+ ... 80.00
2 fn ... 45.00
9 vg+ ... 16.00
11 fa-g (brittle edges) ... 5.00
13 sm pc out top fc, ow vg+ ... 11.00
20 vg+ ... 8.00
21 two sm binder holes; small pc tape on sp, ow vg-fn ... 6.00

PIRACY: #3 vg, ts ... 7.50
4 vg-fn, c ... 3.00
6 vg-fn ... 10.00

SHOCK SUSPENSORIES: #2 vg ... 21.00
4 vg, sl sp roll ... 13.00
10 vg-fn ... 14.00
13 Crandall story is excellent b&w photocopy; rest of mag vg ... 10.00
16 fn ... 14.00

TALES FROM THE CRYPT:
20(1) vg-fn, slight sp roll ... 42.00
36 vg ... 12.00
38 g ... 8.00
42 fn ... 15.00
43 g-vg, sp roll ... 8.00
45 sm pc miss fc, ow vg ... 9.00

TERROR ILLUSTRATED: #1 vg ... 8.00

TWO-FISTED TALES: 32 vg-fn ... 12.00
40 vg-fn ... 12.00

VALOR: #2 vg+ ... 8.00
5 g-vg ... 6.00

VAULT OF HORROR: 17 four binder holes, ow vg ... 15.00
22 g-vg, sp chips, restapled ... 11.00
37 vg ... 15.00

WEIRD FANTASY: 14 (Frazetta) vg+ ... 40.00
16 cor fc miss, ow vg-fn ... 20.00

WEIRD SCIENCE: 14(3) fa-g ... 20.00
15(4) g ... 25.00
5 fn (Canadian) ... 29.00
10 g-vg, ts ... 16.00

MORE CARL BARKS MATERIAL:
UNCLE SCROOGE, THE LEMONADE KING
Whitman Top Top Tales, 1960 vg ... 12.00

UNCLE SCROOGE COMICS:
31 face colored fc, ow g ... 2.00
53 fn (3 copies) ... 6.00
53 vg-fn ... 5.00
59 fa-g ... 2.00
65 no bc, ts, ow vg ... 1.50
83 fn ... 1.00
86 m; 97 m; 99 m ... 1.50
89 fn; 103 m; 106 m; 111 m; 112 m ... 1.00

GYRO GEARLOOSE: 1095 vg ... 3.50

CHRISTMAS PARADE (G.K.) #8 w/poster, nm ... 9.00

DONALD DUCK: 52 fn-nm ... 8.00
134 nm; 135 nm ... 2.00

WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES:
94 2 binder holes, ow fn+ ... 10.00
97 g+; 99 g ... 6.00
103 vg ... 7.00
110 g-vg; 111 g-vg ... 6.00
112 vg; 112 2 bind holes, ow fn+ ... 7.50
113 vg; 114 vg+ ... 6.50
114 g; 117 g ... 5.00
124 g; 125 g ... 5.00
125 fn-nm; 129 fn+ note white

WINGS: 98 fn-nm ... 3.50

CAPT. MARVEL, JR. (cont'd):
28 vg-fn ... 10.00
29 fn ... 12.00
30 nm ... 17.00
32 fn ... 8.00
37 3/4 fc, ow fn-nm ... 3.00
38 nm; 39 nm; 40 nm ... 11.00
42 nm; 44 nm; 45 nm; 46 nm ... 7.00
47 nm; 48 nm; 49 nm ... 7.00
51 fa, ts ... 1.00
52 fn ... 5.00
54 nm ... 7.00
56 vg, sp roll ... 3.00
57 nm; 58 nm ... 7.00
59 g ... 2.50
71 vg+; 72 vg+ ... 3.00
74 fn ... 4.00
77 vg-fn ... 3.50
78 g-vg, ts; 79 g-vg, ts ... 2.50
96 g-vg ... 2.00
97 g; 98 g ... 5.50
99 nm ... 4.00
101 fn ... 3.50
102 vg-fn; 103 vg-fn; 106 vg-fn ... 3.50
108 gill; g-vg; 113 hole fc, ow fn ... 2.00
114 fn ... 4.00

(three more early numbers:)
4 fn ... 60.00
6 fn; 7 fn ... 35.00

CLASSIC COMICS (Originals):
9 sm binder hole upper left cor (no art affected), ow vg-fn ... 20.00
25 vg-fn ... 14.00
28 fn-nm ... 19.00
28 fn+ ... 18.00

CLASSIC COMICS (Reprints):
2(20) g-vg ... 8.00
4(21) fn-nm ... 15.00
6(18) vg ... 14.00
7(18) vg+ to fn ... 16.00
9(18) vg+ ... 15.00
10(18) vg-fn ... 10.00
15(15) vg-fn ... 20.00
16(20) no bc, cor fc miss, ow vg ... 3.00
18(20) vg ... 9.00

CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED (Originals):
35 vg-fn ... 17.50
45 fn+ ... 14.00
48 vg+ ... 5.00
53 nm ... 11.50
76 fn-nm ... 5.00
79 nm-m ... 6.00
89 nm ... 3.00
91 m ... 8.00
114 m ... 9.00
142 vg+ ... 3.00

COMIC CAVALCADE: #9 tape inside fc & bc at spine, ow vg+ ... 15.00

GEORGIE: 14 (WOLVERTON, KURTZMAN) vg+ 4.00

KID ETERNITY: 3 (Mac Raboy) vg+ ... 9.00
7 g-vg, sp roll ... 2.00

MARVEL FAMILY: #2 3/4 fc, magictape repairs slits on 3 pgs, ow nm ... 9.00
5 nm ... 22.00
18 fn ... 10.00
34 pc fc miss, ow g-vg ... 2.00

MASTER: 29 color faded fc, ow fn ... 45.00
32 sm chip out bottom fc, ow vg+ ... 32.00
39 g-vg, ts ... 20.00
42 fn-nm ... 24.00
44 vg-fn; 45 vg-fn ... 18.00
47 fn+ ... 22.00
48 vg-fn ... 18.00
64 fn; 72 fn ... 7.00

WINGS: 98 fn-nm ... 3.50

CAPT. MARVEL COMICS: 7 nm ... 95.00
10 vg; 12 fn+ ... 48.00
13 vg+; 14 vg+ ... 35.00
16 coup cut, ow g ... 15.00
17 vg ... 28.00
24 vg ... 20.00
37 vg ... 12.00
53 vg-fn; 54 vg-fn ... 7.00
59 nm ... 11.00
61 3/4 fc, ow fn-nm ... 5.00

67 nm; 68 fn-nm; 69 nm ... 10.00
70 vg+; 71 edges waterst, ow nm ... 7.00
72 sm pc tape fc & bc, ow fn ... 7.00
73 fn-nm; 74 fn-nm; 75 fn-nm ... 10.00
76 fn-nm ... 10.00
80 vg; 81 fn-nm; 82 nm ... 8.50
82 vg-fn ... 6.00
84 m ... 10.00
89 fn-nm ... 8.50
90 fn ... 6.50
92 vg-fn ... 4.50
102 fn ... 5.50
113 vg; 123 vg-fn ... 4.00

CAPT. MARVEL, JR.: 12 fa ... 5.00
24 vg; 26 vg ... 7.50
27 nm ... 16.00

HAUNT OF FEAR (cont'd): #20 g+ ... 12.00
21 g ... 8.00

IMPACT: #1 nm ... 14.00
5 tape inside bc, ow fn ... 5.00

INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION: 33 vg+ ... 23.00

MAD: #1 vg+ ... 80.00
2 fn ... 45.00
9 vg+ ... 16.00
11 fa-g (brittle edges) ... 5.00
13 sm pc out top fc, ow vg+ ... 11.00
20 vg+ ... 8.00
21 two sm binder holes; small pc tape on sp, ow vg-fn ... 6.00

PIRACY: #3 vg, ts ... 7.50
4 vg-fn, c ... 3.00
6 vg-fn ... 10.00

SHOCK SUSPENSORIES: #2 vg ... 21.00
4 vg, sl sp roll ... 13.00
10 vg-fn ... 14.00
13 Crandall story is excellent b&w photocopy; rest of mag vg ... 10.00
16 fn ... 14.00

TALES FROM THE CRYPT:
20(1) vg-fn, slight sp roll ... 42.00
36 vg ... 12.00
38 g ... 8.00
42 fn ... 15.00
43 g-vg, sp roll ... 8.00
45 sm pc miss fc, ow vg ... 9.00

TERROR ILLUSTRATED: #1 vg ... 8.00

TWO-FISTED TALES: 32 vg-fn ... 12.00
40 vg-fn ... 12.00

VALOR: #2 vg+ ... 8.00
5 g-vg ... 6.00

VAULT OF HORROR: 17 four binder holes, ow vg ... 15.00
22 g-vg, sp chips, restapled ... 11.00
37 vg ... 15.00

WEIRD FANTASY: 14 (Frazetta) vg+ ... 40.00
16 cor fc miss, ow vg-fn ... 20.00

WEIRD SCIENCE: 14(3) fa-g ... 20.00
15(4) g ... 25.00
5 fn (Canadian) ... 29.00
10 g-vg, ts ... 16.00

MORE CARL BARKS MATERIAL:
UNCLE SCROOGE, THE LEMONADE KING
Whitman Top Top Tales, 1960 vg ... 12.00

UNCLE SCROOGE COMICS:
31 face colored fc, ow g ... 2.00
53 fn (3 copies) ... 6.00
53 vg-fn ... 5.00
59 fa-g ... 2.00
65 no bc, ts, ow vg ... 1.50
83 fn ... 1.00
86 m; 97 m; 99 m ... 1.50
89 fn; 103 m; 106 m; 111 m; 112 m ... 1.00

GYRO GEARLOOSE: 1095 vg ... 3.50

CHRISTMAS PARADE (G.K.) #8 w/poster, nm ... 9.00

DONALD DUCK: 52 fn-nm ... 8.00
134 nm; 135 nm ... 2.00

WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES:
94 2 binder holes, ow fn+ ... 10.00
97 g+; 99 g ... 6.00
103 vg ... 7.00
110 g-vg; 111 g-vg ... 6.00
112 vg; 112 2 bind holes, ow fn+ ... 7.50
113 vg; 114 vg+ ... 6.50
114 g; 117 g ... 5.00
124 g; 125 g ... 5.00
125 fn-nm; 129 fn+ note white

WINGS: 98 fn-nm ... 3.50

CAPT. MARVEL, JR. (cont'd):
28 vg-fn ... 10.00
29 fn ... 12.00
30 nm ... 17.00
32 fn ... 8.00
37 3/4 fc, ow fn-nm ... 3.00
38 nm; 39 nm; 40 nm ... 11.00
42 nm; 44 nm; 45 nm; 46 nm ... 7.00
47 nm; 48 nm; 49 nm ... 7.00
51 fa, ts ... 1.00
52 fn ... 5.00
54 nm ... 7.00
56 vg, sp roll ... 3.00
57 nm; 58 nm ... 7.00
59 g ... 2.50
71 vg+; 72 vg+ ... 3.00
74 fn ... 4.00
77 vg-fn ... 3.50
78 g-vg, ts; 79 g-vg, ts ... 2.50
96 g-vg ... 2.00
97 g; 98 g ... 5.50
99 nm ... 4.00
101 fn ... 3.50
102 vg-fn; 103 vg-fn; 106 vg-fn ... 3.50
108 gill; g-vg; 113 hole fc, ow fn ... 2.00
114 fn ... 4.00

(three more early numbers:)
4 fn ... 60.00
6 fn; 7 fn ... 35.00

CLASSIC COMICS (Originals):
9 sm binder hole upper left cor (no art affected), ow vg-fn ... 20.00
25 vg-fn ... 14.00
28 fn-nm ... 19.00
28 fn+ ... 18.00

CLASSIC COMICS (Reprints):
2(20) g-vg ... 8.00
4(21) fn-nm ... 15.00
6(18) vg ... 14.00
7(18) vg+ to fn ... 16.00
9(18) vg+ ... 15.00
10(18) vg-fn ... 10.00
15(15) vg-fn ... 20.00
16(20) no bc, cor fc miss, ow vg ... 3.00
18(20) vg ... 9.00

CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED (Originals):
35 vg-fn ... 17.50
45 fn+ ... 14.00
48 vg+ ... 5.00
53 nm ... 11.50
76 fn-nm ... 5.00
79 nm-m ... 6.00
89 nm ... 3.00
91 m ... 8.00
114 m ... 9.00
142 vg+ ... 3.00

COMIC CAVALCADE: #9 tape inside fc & bc at spine, ow vg+ ... 15.00

GEORGIE: 14 (WOLVERTON, KURTZMAN) vg+ 4.00

KID ETERNITY: 3 (Mac Raboy) vg+ ... 9.00
7 g-vg, sp roll ... 2.00

MARVEL FAMILY: #2 3/4 fc, magictape repairs slits on 3 pgs, ow nm ... 9.00
5 nm ... 22.00
18 fn ... 10.00
34 pc fc miss, ow g-vg ... 2.00

MASTER: 29 color faded fc, ow fn ... 45.00
32 sm chip out bottom fc, ow vg+ ... 32.00
39 g-vg, ts ... 20.00
42 fn-nm ... 24.00
44 vg-fn; 45 vg-fn ... 18.00
47 fn+ ... 22.00
48 vg-fn ... 18.00
64 fn; 72 fn ... 7.00

WINGS: 98 fn-nm ... 3.50

CAPT. MARVEL COMICS: 7 nm ... 95.00
10 vg; 12 fn+ ... 48.00
13 vg+; 14 vg+ ... 35.00
16 coup cut, ow g ... 15.00
17 vg ... 28.00
24 vg ... 20.00
37 vg ... 12.00
53 vg-fn; 54 vg-fn ... 7.00
59 nm ... 11.00
61 3/4 fc, ow fn-nm ... 5.00

67 nm; 68 fn-nm; 69 nm ... 10.00
70 vg+; 71 edges waterst, ow nm ... 7.00
72 sm pc tape fc & bc, ow fn ... 7.00
73 fn-nm; 74 fn-nm; 75 fn-nm ... 10.00
76 fn-nm ... 10.00
80 vg; 81 fn-nm; 82 nm ... 8.50
82 vg-fn ... 6.00
84 m ... 10.00
89 fn-nm ... 8.50
90 fn ... 6.50
92 vg-fn ... 4.50
102 fn ... 5.50
11

CHAPTER FIVE
MARVELOUS MISS FURYP.O. BOX 42144
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77042

Miss Fury is the only one of the Timelys that I collect. This is mainly because of its exceptional story line. Since it is continued from one comic to the next, you had better get all that you don't have or you will be stuck. The ones in this ad are from my personal collection which I recently had the good fortune to up-grade to NM+.

All of the comics in this ad are strictly graded, but may be returned within seven days of receipt for any reason. On orders under \$50, add \$1.00 for postage, insurance and handling or \$2.50 if Air Mail is desired. On orders over \$50, add \$1.50 if Air Mail is desired. For purchases over \$100, terms can be arranged.

Phone 713/467-7948 between 7:00 and 10:00 Central Time. Please observe these hours. This is the only time that I think clearly. Thanks. Burrel.

Little OA Sparks GAW 2vgt	10	Military 13v	45
Lone Ranger lfrnm	30	39frnm (tear on cover)	22
Mad 3vf (tiny hole through book)	25	Miss Fury lfrnm	230
5nm	115	2f (very slight browning i/s cvr)	90
11vgv (tear on cover)	10	3frnm	85
12vgf	13	4frnm	85
13vg (some color off of cover)	12	5vf	75
15vg	12	6f (tear on staple)	40
Mary Marvel 15frnm	12	7vf (tiny piece off spine)	50
Marvel 7f (tiny non-art piece off interior page)	500	8vgf (tear on spine)	30
14frnm	250	Moon Girl Romance 10f (spine split, tear on cover)	35
15vf	225	Moon Girl 4frnm (but two art panels removed)	10
16vf (tiny tear on cover)	180	5nm (but piece off cover)	40
18frnm (tear on back cover)	200	More Fun 58f	135
38fa-g (brittle)	25	71frnm	125
47frnm	70	71frnm (tiny tear on back cvr, store stamp)	110
54frnm (sun shadow on top)	50	96f	27
56nm	60	97vf	30
58vf (tiny piece off cover)	45	Movie Comics (1939) 1vf	120
78nm	35	2vf (tear on spine)	75
81vf (tear on top cover)	25	3f	65
83frnm	30	4frnm (tear on spine)	85
84vf (tear on back cover, slight foxing; 1st Blond Phantom)	35	5nm (tiny piece off spine)	90
85nm	35	Movie Love 8vf (tear on bk cvr)	45
86vgf (tears on back cover)	20	10vg (tiny pieces off edge)	35
Marvel Family 5frnm	15	10f (tiny pieces off edge)	40
7frnm	13	Myra North c3frnm (tiny tear on spine)	25
7vf (piece off spine)	15	Mystery Men 2vgf	55
9frnm	7	Mystic (1st Series) The prices on some of these are outrageous for two reasons: First, I feel that Overstreet has always tended to underprice these and Daring in comparison to other Timelys and, second, because of the beautiful condition of some of these, they are worth it for the serious condition collector.	
12vf (tears on spine and cover)	10	1nm+ (Perfect, never opened)	1000
13vf	11	2vf (slight tear on spine)	250
18frnm	7	3nm	220
22f (center loose)	7	6nm	200
29f (piece off edge)	7	7nm+	180
Master 29vf (minor spot on cover)	75	9nm (tiny piece off edge)	150
31vgf	40	10nm (tiny piece off spine and int. panel)	150
32vg (sun shadow on cover)	35		
35vf	45		
36vf (tiny piece off cover)	40		
50vf (cover loose)	13		
M.D. lfrnm	8		
Mickey Mouse 4cll16nm (tiny tear on cover)	22		
4cl157nm	18		
4cl194frnm	16		
4c231vf	11		
4c261frnm (piece off spine)	9		
4c286vgf (spot, crease on cover)	7		
4c352vf (tear on spine)	7		
Military lvg (tears on spine)	225		
2vg	95		
5vf (some int. pgs. torn)	75		
9vf (int. pgs. torn)	60		
10vg (frnt cvr and int. pgs torn)	40		
12g (piece off cvr and int pgs)	30		
13vg (piece off back cvr and int pgs)	25		

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK
CHAPTER SIX
NAMORA AND NYOKA
A CAST OF THOUSANDS: DON'T
MISS IT!

Investments in Rare Comic Books

DRAWING #1: FIVE MINT COPIES OF NOVA #1

Each person who sends in an order of \$3.00 or more will be entered in the drawing, to be held one month from the cover date of this issue of T&G. The winners name will be published in my next ad. I hope to make this a regular feature, if the response is good.

Condition code:

f=fair
g=good
v=very good
n=near mint
m=mint

Most of the mint comics from the last year have never been opened, and are truly nice. I have duplicates of just about every issue, so don't hesitate to order.

Postage charges are:

1-15 comics, 35¢
16-25 comics, 50¢
more than 25, 65¢

Insurance is 40¢ extra. SASE's are appreciated, but not necessary.

You get the following when you order from me:

- 1) STRICTLY graded comics
- 2) your order is mailed within 48 hours, unless you send a large personal check
- 3) all orders are securely packaged (the postal service hates this)

That should cover everything. Thank you for your time!

MARVEL

A. SPIDER-MAN
.40-131m 138m 139v 140m
.35-146m 147m 150-152m
.30-155g 156v 157n 159-163m
164n 166-170m

AVENGERS
.35-129n 134m 141n 142n
.30-146n 150-154m 157-161m

BLACK GOLIATH
.30-1m 2m 4m 5m

BLACK PANTHER
.50-1m
.30-2-4m

C. AMERICA
.30-177n 178f 189g 190g
191g 192v 194m 196v
199n 200-204m 207-211m

C. MARVEL
.30-41v 42v 45v 46m 47m
49-51m

CHAMPIONS
.50-3n 4n
.40-3v 5n 6-8v
.30-9m 10v 11v 12-14m

CONAN
3.75-6g
3.25-11g 13n 17m
.40-47m 48m 50-52m 54m
55n 56v
.35-61n 63-69m
.30-56g 72-76m

CONAN ANNUAL
.60-2m

DAREDEVIL
.30-132n 143-147m
.20-119f 124g 136g

DEFENDERS
.30-30v 33v 34m 36-42m
45-49m

DR. STRANGE
.50-3m
.40-6n 7n 9m 10m
.35-15-20m
.30-11v 13v 14g 22m 23m

ETERNALS
1.00-1m
.50-2m 3m
.40-4-6m
.30-9-13m

FANTASTIC FOUR
.40-135m 140m 142-144m
147m 150m
.30-124f 148g 149g 151g
152g 156m 162g 163m
164n 169g 173-177m
180-184m

FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL
.50-11m

GHOST RIDER
.30-15v 16v 23m 24m
.15-17f

HOWARD THE DUCK
.55-4m 5m
.45-6m 7m
.30-9-13m

HULK
.35-172v 174v 193v 196v
.30-189g 199v 201n 202-206m 209-213m

INHUMANS
1.00-1m
.40-2n 3m
.35-4-6m
.30-7m 8m 10m 11m

INVADERS
.50-5n 6n
.40-5-7v 8m 9v 10m 11n 12n
.30-14-18m

IRON FIST
.30-12m 13m

IRON MAN
.30-70m 74v 75v 76m 77v 78m
80g 82v 85n 86g 96m 97-100m

KAZAR
.25-2g 3-6v 7m 8n 10v

KULL
.30-16-18m 20m 21m

LOGAN'S RUN
.50-1m
.35-2m 3m
.30-4-6m

MAN-THING
.35-4g 5-7m 8n 9n 13n 14m
15n 16v 17m 18m

M. CHILLERS
.30-1n 5-7m

M. FEATURE (Red Sonja)
.50-2n
.40-3n 5-7m

M. PREMIERE
.30-17n 19f 21g 26g 27g 31-33m 35m 36m

M. PRESENTS
.30-1n 5-7m 10m

M. SPOTLIGHT
.30-29-31m 33m

M. TEAM-UP
.30-23m 25g 26f 28g 35-39g 40v 45v 46-52m
55-59m

M. TEAM-UP ANNUAL
.50-1v

M. TWO-IN-ONE
.40-11v 16v 17-20m
.30-21m 22m 25-29m

M. TWO-IN-ONE ANNUAL
.60-1m

MASTER OF KUNG FU
.30-19m 37m 39v 41v 42n
43m 50-54m

MS. MARVEL
.60-1m
.40-2m 3m
.30-4m 6m 7m

NOVA
1.25-1m
.50-2m 3m
.40-4m 6m
.30-7-10m

OMEGA
.40-2-5m
.30-7-9m

PETER PARKER
.80-1m
.35-3-7m

POWER MAN
.30-19v 20v 22g 26g 27v 29m
41-45m

RED SONJA
.50-1m
.30-2-4m

SKULL, THE SLAYER
.35-1v 2n 4m 5v

SON OF SATAN
.30-1v 3v

STRANGE TALES
.25-176g 186n

SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP
.45-2v
.30-6-9m 11m

THOR
.30-224g 225g 228v 239v
240m 241n 242n 249v
250-254m 257-261m

TOMB OF DRACULA
.30-29n 37n 40n 48v 54-58m

2001: SPACE ODYSSEY
.50-1m
.30-1v 4-8m

WARLOCK
.30-10n 11v 12-15m

WEREWOLF BY NIGHT
.30-43m

WHAT IF?
.90-1m
.65-2m
.50-3m

X-MEN
.40-95v 96n 97n 98n 99v
100-102m 104m 105m

DC
ACTION
.40-348n 366m 449n
.30-405v 407v 455m 465n
466n 469m 470n

ADVENTURE
.30-442n 443n 444m 448n
450m

ALL-STAR
.40-58n
.30-61-63m 65m 66m

BATMAN
.35-236n 289m
.30-253v 264v 267m 268m
271m 279m 282m 285n
286m

BRAVE & BOLD
.45-92n 94v 95m 96n 102m
104n 113m 117m 120v
.35-106-109m 111m 112m 118m
.30-122g 123m 124n 125m
131m 133m

DEMON
.30-2g 4v 5v 8v 9g 10m 12-14v 15m 16n

FREEDOM FIGHTERS
.40-1m 2n 3m
.30-4m 5m 7m 8m

G.I. COMBAT
.30-102g 177n 181m 182n
186m 187v 188m 195n
197n

JUSTICE LEAGUE
.60-110v 143m 144m
.50-140-142m
.40-73v 96m 98v 99m 103n
104m 106m 107m
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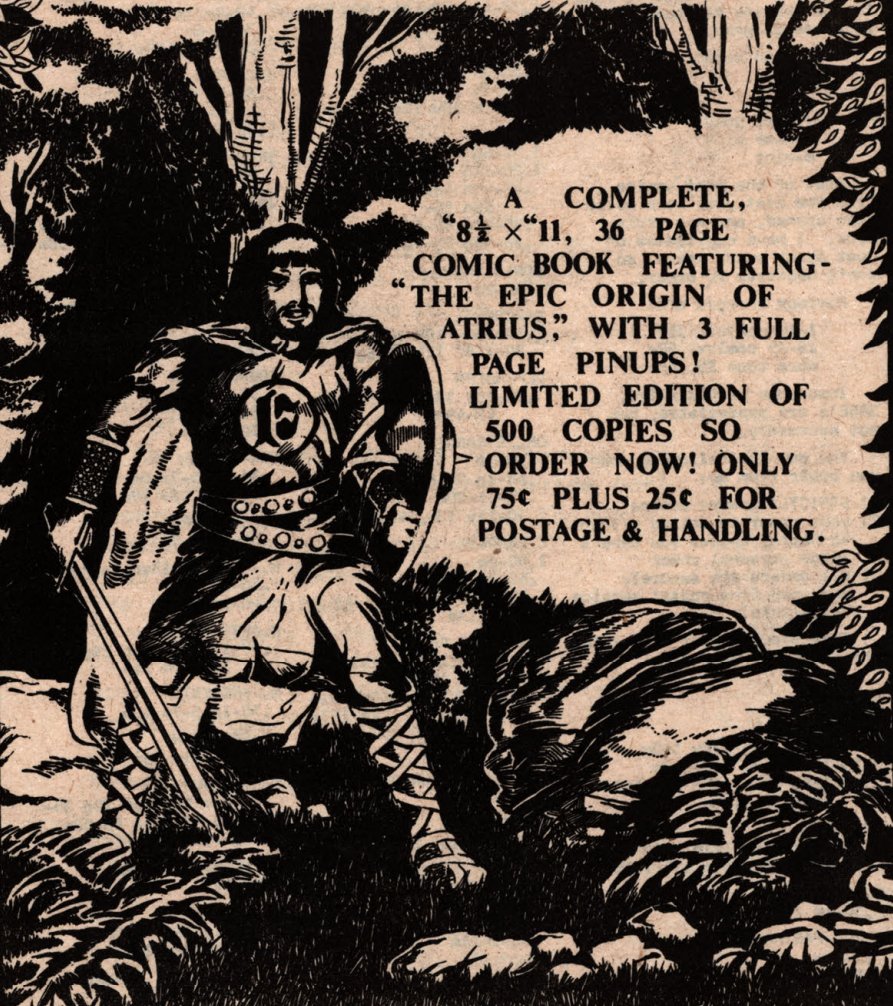
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pg. 2

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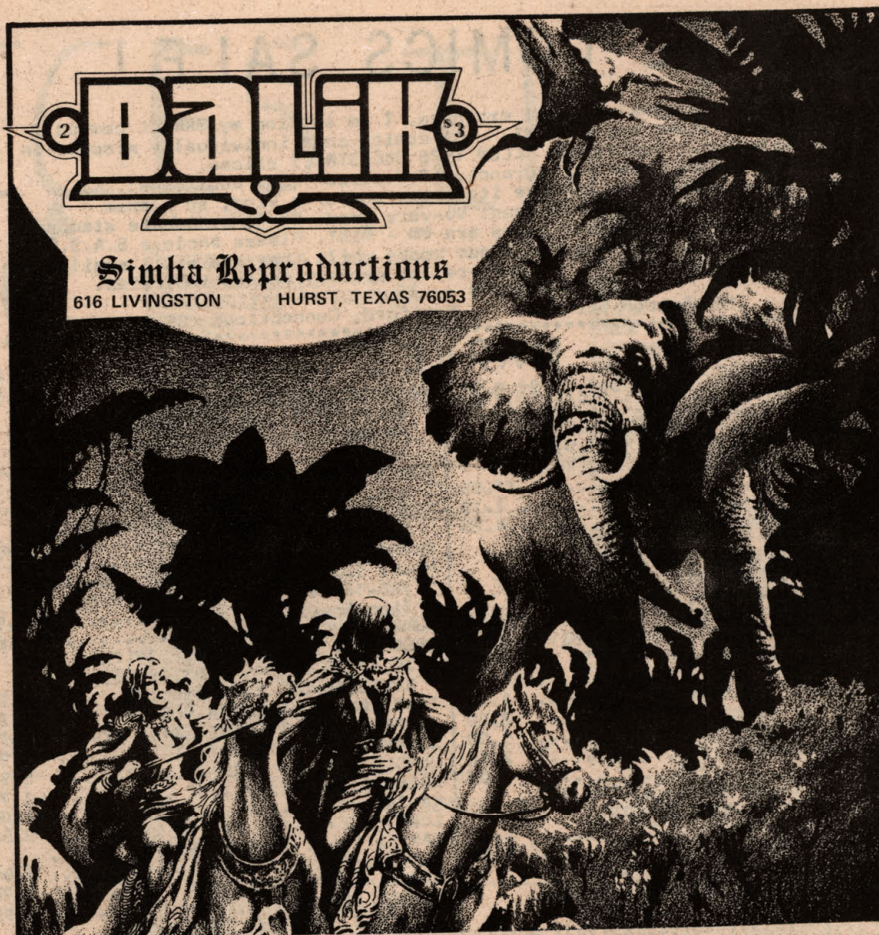
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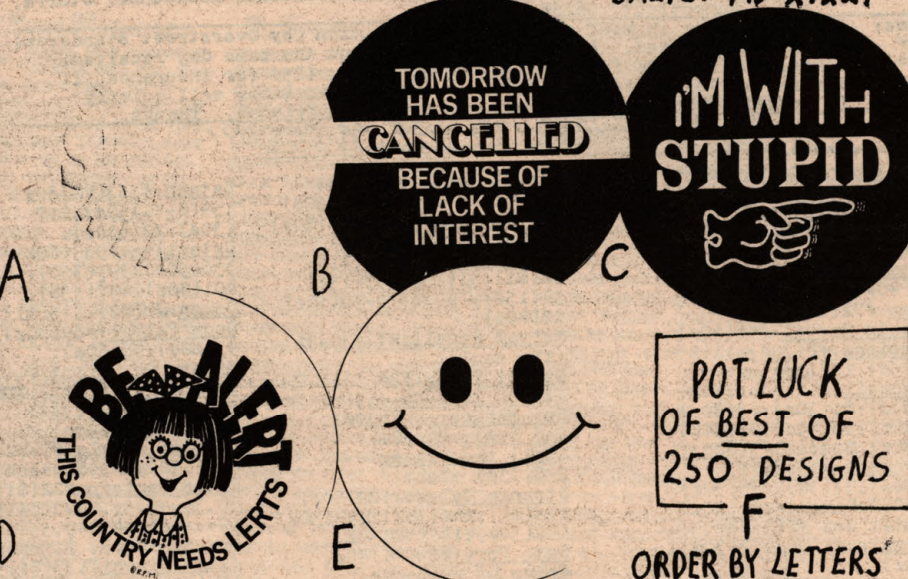
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"The winsome empress sat brooding and sullen on a throne of pink-veined marble. Her long tresses of scarlet gleamed crimson and gold in the flickering flames of the ornate floor lamp beside her. The deep red of her silk gown enhanced the ivory whiteness of her skin. Silent and still she sat, like a sculptured goddess. Through long ebony lashes stared her haunting dark eyes. Before her the mist had formed moving pictures. Within the cryptic vapors she saw four riders in the desert near the emerald city of Yen. Suddenly her mystic eyes widened and sparkled as a plan of vengeance formed in her insidious mind...."

The above is an excerpt from the fantasy tale, "Balik and the Siren of Alcatraz", by Clifford Bird, as edited by Andrew Offutt and Charles Saunders. The complete tale appears in Balik #2, with an introduction by writer-publisher, Wayne Warfield. Imaro author Charles Saunders contributes "The Epoh of Kush". Cover art by Steve Fabian and Clyde Caldwell, with interior art by Frazetta-CMB, Clyde Caldwell, William Black, Ken Raney, Paul Schliesser, Michael Allen Call, Gene Day, and Clifford Bird. The 56 page magazine is \$3.00 plus .30 postage and handling. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Clifford Bird. Send to address above.

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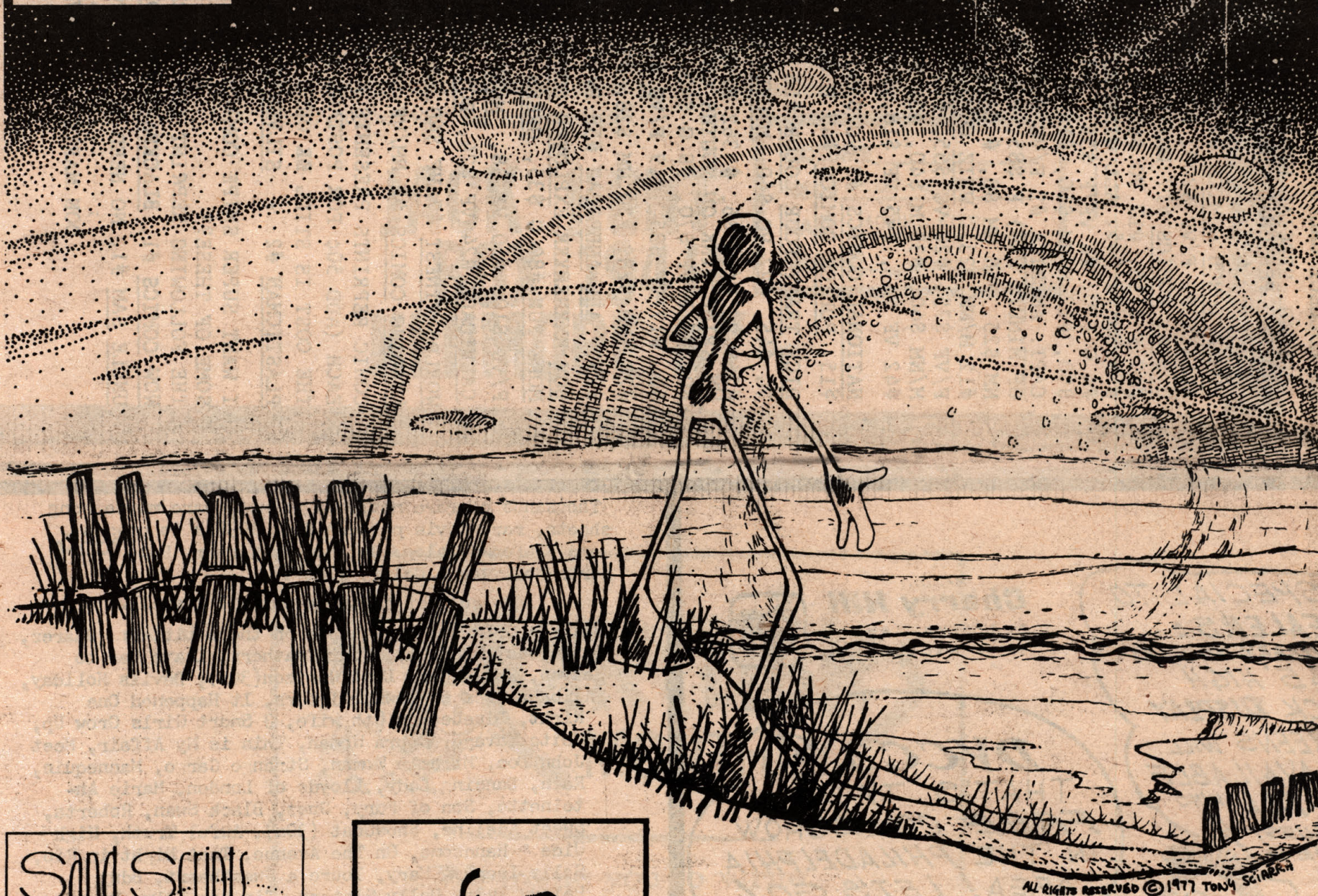
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